



**Conclusions of the 23rd Meeting of the Standing Committee
of the International Conference of Asian Political Parties
(Colombo, Sri Lanka, September 18, 2014)**

The 23rd Meeting (hereinafter referred to as “the Meeting”) of the Standing Committee (hereinafter referred to as “the SC”) of the International Conference of Asian Political Parties (hereinafter referred to as “the ICAPP”) was held at the Ivy Room of Cinnamon Grand Hotel in Colombo, Sri Lanka under the auspices of the governing Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) and the opposition United National Party (UNP) of Sri Lanka from 21:00 to 24:00 p.m. on September 18, 2014. The Meeting was held prior to the 8th General Assembly (GA) which was also co-hosted by the SLFP and the UNP from September 19 to 21.

The list of participants and annotated agenda of the Meeting are attached as *Appendixes I and II*.

The Meeting was chaired by Hon. Jose de Venecia, Jr., Founding Chairman and Co-Chairman of the SC and Hon. Chung Eui-yong, Co-Chairman of the SC and Secretary General of the ICAPP.

The SC Members paid a courtesy call on H.E. Mahinda Rajapaksa, President of the Socialist Democratic Republic of Sri Lanka and Chairman of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, in the evening of September 20 at the Temple Trees, the official presidential residence in Colombo. At the meeting, President Rajapaksa welcomed the SC Members and other participants in the 8th GA of the ICAPP and commended the contributions the ICAPP has made to regional stability and peace through expanded cooperation among political parties

I. Preparations for the 8th General Assembly of the ICAPP

Hon. Maithripala Sirisena, Minister of Health and Secretary General of the SLFP, and Chairman of the Organizing Committee of the 8th GA of the ICAPP welcomed the SC Members to Colombo on behalf of His Excellency President Mahinda Rajapaksa and made a report on the state of preparations for the 8th GA. A total of 64 political parties from 29 countries in the region has confirmed their participation in the 8th GA, with observers from 3 political parties in 3 countries in Latin America and Africa.

The program, list of participants and conference procedures of the 8th GA are attached as *Appendixes III, IV and V*.

Hon. Daya Gamage, National Organizer of the UNP, also welcomed the SC Members to Colombo, on behalf of Hon. Ranil Wickremesinghe, Chairman of the UNP.

The SC Members expressed their gratitude to the Organizing Committee and the two co-hosts for the excellent preparations for the 8th GA and warm hospitality extended to foreign participants.

Election of the Bureau of the 8th GA

In accordance with Article 7 of the ICAPP Charter and the tradition of the ICAPP, the SC

Members agreed to nominate to the 8th GA His Excellency President Mahinda Rajapaksa as the candidate for Chairman of the 8th GA. They also agreed to nominate six candidates, who had been selected through prior consultation between the Secretariat and the Organizing Committee and based on geographical balance.

The SC Members also agreed to nominate Hon. Namal Rajapaksa, Member of Parliament, SLFP, and Hon. Mrs. Sudarshani Fernandopulle, Member of Parliament, SLFP, as Chairpersons of the 3rd Meeting of the ICAPP Youth Wing and the 2nd Meeting of the ICAPP Women's Wing respectively, which were to be held on the margins of the 8th GA.

Hon. Maithripala Sirisena, Chairman of the Organizing Committee of the 8th GA was also nominated for Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Colombo Declaration which would be adopted at the Closing Session of the 8th GA.

The list of the Candidates for the Bureau of the 8th GA is attached as *Appendix VI*.

Colombo Declaration

The SC Members reviewed the draft Colombo Declaration prepared by the Secretariat and agreed to the first official draft of the Declaration to be submitted to the GA for adoption, which is attached as *Appendix VII*.

II. Report on the ICAPP Activities to the 8th GA

The SC Members reviewed the report on the ICAPP activities since the end of the 7th GA, held in Baku in November 2012, which was prepared by the Secretariat, and agreed to submit it to the 8th GA.

The Report was to be circulated to all participants in the 8th GA as Document No. ICAPP/8GA/010, and included the following activities of the ICAPP during 2013-2014:

Meetings of the ICAPP Standing Committee

- 19th Meeting of the SC (Hanoi, April 24-26, 2013)
- 20th Meeting of the SC (Xi'an, May 29-31, 2013)
- Informal Meeting of the SC (Seoul, September 13, 2013)
- 21st Meeting of the SC (Ankara, November 21-22, 2013)
- 22nd Meeting of the SC (Vladivostok, May 30-June 1, 2014)
- 23rd Meeting of the SC (Colombo, September 18, 2014)

ICAPP Special Conferences

- Special Conference on Promoting Green Development and Building a Beautiful Asia Together (Xi'an, May 29-31, 2013)
- Special Conference on Women's Leadership and Empowerment (Seoul, September 12-14, 2013)

Activities of the ICAPP Women's Wing

- 1st Meeting of the ICAPP Women's Wing (Baku, April 4-6, 2014)
- 1st ICAPP Workshop on Human Trafficking (Kathmandu, January 16-18, 2014)
- Bureau Meetings of the ICAPP Women's Wing
 - a. 1st Bureau Meeting (Baku, April 6, 2013)
 - b. 2nd Bureau Meeting (Bangkok, June 17, 2013)

- c. 3rd Bureau Meeting (Seoul, September 12-14, 2013)
- d. 4th Bureau Meeting (Kathmandu, January 16-18, 2014)

Activities of the ICAPP Youth Wing

- 2nd Meeting of the ICAPP Youth Wing (Baku, August 13-16, 2013)
- 1st Bureau Meeting of the ICAPP Youth Wing (Kuala Lumpur, February 20, 2014)

Special Missions of the ICAPP

- ICAPP Mission to Monitor General Elections in Cambodia (July 25-27, 2013)
- ICAPP Mission to Argentina (September 17-20, 2013)
- ICAPP Mission to Monitor Presidential Election in Azerbaijan (October 7-11, 2013)
- ICAPP Mission to the U.N. General Assembly (October 13-17, 2013)

Other Activities

- ICAPP's Bid for Observer Status in the U.N. General Assembly
- Signing of the Inter-Governmental Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation to Provide Support for ICAPP Activities (Seoul, July 26, 2013)
- 4th Joint Session between the ICAPP Standing Committee and the COPPPAL Coordinating Body (Baku, October 8, 2013)

III. Issues relating to the ICAPP Standing Committee

Expansion of the SC Membership

At the 22nd SC Meeting held in Vladivostok in May 2014, it was agreed to increase the number of the SC Members from 22 countries to 23 countries, and invite the SLFP and the UNP, the co-hosts of the 8th GA, as new members, in accordance with the understandings reached at the 12th and 13th SC Meetings, under which the representative of the political party with the largest number of seats in the national parliament at the time of representation in the SC would represent its country at the SC as a Full Member, while the representative of the political party with second largest number of seats in the national parliament would attend the SC meetings as an Alternate Member to coordinate among themselves to ensure maximum contributions to the ICAPP objectives and activities.

Accordingly, it was agreed at the 22nd SC Meeting to recommend to amend Paragraph 1 of Article 9 of the ICAPP Charter from “A *Standing Committee, composed of the representatives of not exceeding twenty-two (22) political parties from an equal number of countries in the region, shall be established*” to “A ***Standing Committee, composed of the representatives of not exceeding (23) political Parties from an equal number of countries in the region, shall be established.***” The SC Members had also agreed to add a new Paragraph 4 in Article 9 which reads “*The Members of the Standing Committee are encouraged to invite the representatives of one of political parties in their respective countries which have a large number of seats in their respective parliaments as Alternate Members of the Standing Committee.*”

Some SC Members, however, have lately pointed out that the term “Alternate Member” in the Standing Committee might suggest diminishing status or role for the relevant political party in the activities of the Standing Committee, and proposed to find a way that two principal political parties from each country, where applicable, would be encouraged to share the membership in the Standing Committee on the basis of equal status.

In this regard, the SC Members agreed to recommend to amend Paragraph 1 of Article 9 of the Charter as has been agreed at the 22nd SC Meeting, but to revise the new Paragraph 4 to be added to Article 9 of the Charter as ***“The membership in the Standing Committee may be shared by up to two (2) principal political parties from each country, which is invited to the Standing Committee, with equal status and responsibility.”*** The revised recommendation for the amendment of the Charter is attached as ***Appendix VIII***.

New Members of the SC

The Secretariat reported that the leaders of the *Bharatiya Janata Party* (BJP), the new governing party of India, and the Indian National Congress Party have agreed to share the membership in the SC with equal status and responsibility in their meetings with the ICAPP mission in New Dehli on July 12, 2014. The BJP later designated Hon. Vijay Jolly, Global Convenor, BJP Overseas Affairs, as its representative in the SC. Hon. Dr. Karan Singh, Deputy Leader of the Indian National Congress Party, will continue to represent the Party in the SC.

The Secretariat also reported that the National League for Democracy (NLD) of Myanmar, has recently nominated Hon. U Mahn Johnny, Member of Parliament (*Pyithuhluttaw*) and Member of the Central Committee, as its representative in the SC. However, Hon. U Mahn Johnny had to cancel his participation in the 23rd SC Meeting at the last minute due to sudden changes in the schedules of the parliament.

The SC Members welcomed Hon. Maithripala Sirisena, Minister of Health and General Secretary of Sri Lanka Freedom Party, and Hon. Daya Dharmapala Kilittuwa Gamage, National Organizer of the United National Party of Sri Lanka who have been nominated as representatives of the SLFP and the UNP respectively in the SC.

It was also noted that the National Council for Peace and Order which was established after the military coup in Thailand suspended the activities of all political parties in Thailand in May 2014 until further notice. Under the circumstances, it is agreed to invite representatives of the formerly *Pheu Thai* Party and Democrat Party of Thailand to continue to participate in the ICAPP activities, including SC Meetings, as special participants.

Under the new Charter, eleven out of twenty-three countries which would be represented in the SC would be represented by two principal political parties of their countries. They are Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, Lebanon, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand. In this regard, other SC Members were encouraged to share their membership in the SC with another principal political party in their respective countries, where applicable.

The SC Members also noted that the opposition Free Patriotic Movement Party of Lebanon has not yet attended SC Meetings since it was invited to join the SC at the 7th GA held in Baku in November 2012.

Election of Vice Chairman

The SC Members elected Hon. Sok An, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister in charge of the

Office of the Council of Ministers, and Representative of the Cambodian People's Party in the SC, as Vice Chairman of the SC in accordance with Paragraph 1 of Article 11 of the ICAPP Charter.

In this regard, the SC Members also noted that the term of the officers of the SC would be two years until the next GA in accordance with Paragraphs 1 to 3 of Article 11 of the ICAPP Charter. .

Future Meetings of the SC

As has been informed earlier, the leaders of the Indian National Congress Party, offered to host the 24th SC Meeting in New Delhi during the first half of 2015 at their meeting with the ICAPP mission in New Delhi on July 12, 2014. The exact dates and other details for the meeting will be informed in due course. The report of the ICAPP Mission to India is attached as ***Appendix IX***.

In this regard, the political parties represented in the SC, which are yet to host SC meetings, have been requested to consider hosting SC meetings in the future.

IV. Review of the ICAPP Activities since the 21st SC Meeting in November 2013

Launching of the "Global Parties' Climate and Ecological Alliance (GPCEA)"

The SC Members welcomed the initiative by the International Eco-Safety Cooperation Organization (IESCO) to establish the "Global Parties' Climate and Ecological Alliance (GPCEA)" which was launched on July 18, 2014 in Chengdu, China on the sidelines of the "Climate Change and Human Health Forum", hosted by the IESCO.

In this regard, the SC Members confirmed the ICAPP's willingness to actively participate in GPCEA's activities in line with ICAPP's principles and purposes in combating climate change.

ICAPP's Bid for Observer Status in the U.N. General Assembly

The Secretariat reported that, in the absence of clear indication of support for the observer status of the ICAPP in the U.N. General Assembly (UNGA) from the governments of the relevant Latin American countries, it has not taken any action to include the item in the provisional agenda for the 69th session of the UNGA which started in September 2014.

Under the circumstances, the SC Members agreed that the Secretariat would continue its efforts, including closer coordination with the SC Members, and the COPPPAL and the CAPP, and dispatch of ICAPP missions to the governments of the relevant countries in Latin America, and elsewhere if necessary, with a view to including the item on the provisional agenda for the 70th session of the UNGA which will start in September 2015. They also agreed to strongly recommend governments of all countries in the region to demonstrate more actively their solidarity and support in the UNGA for the ICAPP initiative.

Signing of the MOU on Cooperation to Support ICAPP Activities

As reported at the 22nd SC Meeting in Vladivostok in May 2014, the governments of eight countries in the region, including Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Iran, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka and Vietnam, have so far signed the inter-governmental “MOU on Cooperation to Provide Support for ICAPP Activities”, since July 26, 2013. It was also reported that several SC Members, including Kazakhstan, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines and Turkey, have also indicated that their respective governments are giving positive consideration to signing the MOU in the near future.

In this regard, the SC Members reiterated their view that the increased number of signatories to the MOU would further cement the position of the ICAPP in its efforts to obtain observer status in the UNGA.

V. Future Work Programs and Activities of the ICAPP

1st ICAPP-APA Joint Session

The SC Members recalled that, at the 9th SC Meeting held in Islamabad in March 2008, they agreed to hold a joint session between the ICAPP Standing Committee and the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA) Executive Council to explore ways to promote cooperation and coordination between the two organizations, and expressed their regret that such joint meetings have not yet been realized due to lack of communication and coordination between the Secretariats of the ICAPP and the APA.

The APA Secretariat proposed to consider holding the 1st ICAPP-APA joint session on the sidelines of the next APA Executive Council meeting to be held in Islamabad during December 14-18, 2014.

In this regard, the SC Members expressed their preference to hold the first joint session on the sidelines of the ICAPP SC Meetings. The SC Members also stressed the need to more clearly identify areas for cooperation between the ICAPP and the APA and develop detailed agenda for the joint session, and requested the Secretariat to continue its efforts to closely coordinate with the APA Secretariat in Tehran to hold the first joint session in the near future.

The SC Member representing the Cambodian People’s Party (CPP) proposed to consider holding the first joint session on the sidelines of the APA Plenary Meeting which will be hosted by the CPP in Phnom Penh in November 2015. The SC Member representing the *Yeni* Azerbaijan Party also offered to host the joint session in Baku before April 2015.

The APA Secretariat submitted to the SC Members for their reference the “Declaration on Principles of Friendship and Cooperation in Asia” which was adopted by the APA Plenary on November 29, 2008. The document is attached as ***Appendix X***.

VI. Cooperation with COPPPAL and CAPP

5th ICAPP-COPPPAL Joint Session

The SC Members agreed to hold the 5th Joint Session between the ICAPP Standing

Committee and the COPPPAL Coordinating Body (CB) in Mexico City during November 26 to 29, 2014, as proposed by the Secretariat after consultation with the COPPPAL Secretariat. The tentative program for the joint session and the items for the agenda are attached as *Appendixes XI and XII*.

More detailed information about the joint session will be provided in due course after consultation with the COPPPAL Secretariat.

Launching of the Asian-Latin American Business Council

It was also agreed to hold the 1st Meeting of the Asian-Latin American Business Council on the sidelines of the 5th Joint Session between the ICAPP SC and the COPPPAL CB.

In this regard, the SC Members are requested to nominate more than two business leaders from each country for the business council as they had agreed at the 21st SC Meeting in Ankara in November 2013. So far, five SC Members, representing Cambodia, China, Nepal, Korea and Pakistan have nominated their business representatives for the council. The Secretariat was recently informed by the COPPPAL Secretariat that around 150 business leaders from Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Peru are expected to participate in the business council meeting. The list of the ICAPP business representatives for the Asian-Latin American Business council is attached as *Appendix XIII*.

Trilateral Cooperation among the ICAPP, COPPPAL and CAPP

The SC Members had reaffirmed their previous commitment to convene the 1st Trilateral Conference among the ICAPP, COPPPAL and CAPP in the near future. They, however, stressed (1) the need for both COPPPAL and CAPP to be more inclusive with region-wide participation of political parties, and (2) the need to start planning for specific joint efforts in the areas of common interest and gradually working together toward further institutionalization of the trilateral cooperation.

It was further noted that the three organizations would need to do more preparatory work on how to mobilize the collaborative efforts and on how to develop topics which could capture the interests of all three continents and organizations.

In this regard, the CAPP Secretariat submitted to the SC Members for their reference the latest "Report on CAPP Activities" which is attached as *Appendix XIV*.

VII. Other Issues

Principles and Practices of the ICAPP

Some SC Members stressed that consensus-building, or unanimous decision-making, is one of the main pillars of the ICAPP and the ICAPP should continue to abide by this principle, among others.

Some SC Members also pointed out the understanding, reached at the 13th SC Meeting in July 2010, that all representatives at any ICAPP meetings should refrain from raising any issues directly related to bilateral conflicts or disputes among the countries in the region. They stressed that this understanding should be well taken note of by all participants in future

ICAPP activities.

Appendixes:

- I. List of Participants in the 23rd SC Meeting**
- II. Annotated Agenda for the 23rd SC Meeting**
- III. Program of the 8th GA**
- IV. List of Participants in the 8th GA**
- V. Conference Procedures of the 8th GA**
- VI. List of Candidates for the Bureau of the 8th GA**
- VII. Colombo Declaration (final version)**
- VIII. Recommendation for the Amendment of the ICAPP Charter**
- IX. Report of the ICAPP Mission to India**
- X. APA's Declaration on Principles of Friendship and Cooperation in Asia**
- XI. Program of the 5th ICAPP-COPPPAL Joint Session**
- XII. Agenda Items for the 5th ICAPP-COPPPAL Joint Session**
- XIII. List of ICAPP Business Representatives**
- XIV. Report of CAPP Activities**