



International Conference of Asian Political Parties

Brief Introduction of the ICAPP

(June 2018)

The International Conference of Asian Political Parties (ICAPP) was launched in Manila in September **2000 to promote exchanges and cooperation** between political parties with various ideologies from different Asian countries; to enhance mutual understanding and trust among Asian countries; to promote Asia's regional cooperation through dialogues and common programs among political parties, and to foster environment for solid peace, shared prosperity and diverse cultural exchanges in the region and beyond.

Since its inception, the ICAPP has grown steadily in both membership and influence. By bringing together Asia's political leaders in regular fraternal assemblies, the ICAPP has become a valuable platform for mutual understanding among peoples of Asian countries and beyond. As of May 2018, more than 352 political parties in 52 countries in the region with diverse political and ideological backgrounds are eligible to participate in ICAPP activities. The ICAPP will be able to contribute to works of global multilateral institutions such as the UN and UNESCO, based on its unique **characteristics and potentials** as follows:

First, the ICAPP is a constructive and visionary **network of political parties**, both ruling and in opposition. The ruling parties participating in ICAPP are responsible for forming the governments in their respective countries. These ruling parties are interconnected with the governments and virtually be identified as the governments. The political parties in opposition also champion alternative policies, platforms, and agendas, sometimes together with a shadow cabinet, thus influencing and engaging substantively in the activities of the governments. Thus, political parties constitute part and parcel of the government, and the ICAPP is characterized as **a kind of the intergovernmental organization of independent states**.

Second, the ICAPP has been strengthened with **its solid and efficiently managed structure of the General Assembly, Standing Committee, its affiliated bodies, such as Youth Wing, Women's Wing, Media Forum and Asian Cultural Council, and Special Conferences**. Nine General Assemblies of the ICAPP, which have been successfully held in Manila (2000), Bangkok (2002), Beijing (2004), Seoul (2006), Astana (2009), Phnom Penh (2010), Baku (2012), Colombo (2014) and Kuala Lumpur (2016), brought together political leaders throughout the region to exchange opinions

and communicate with one another. The 10th General Assembly is going to be held in Moscow in Russia in October 24-27, 2018. The ICAPP Standing Committee is comprised of the leading political parties of 23 countries representing different sub-regions of Asia. Currently, a total of 38 political parties, both ruling and opposition, are represented in the Standing Committee. The committee has been meeting regularly, more than twice a year since 2004, to organize the ICAPP activities and programs in an effective and concerted manner.

Third, following the decision of the Standing Committee meeting in 2008, the 10th meeting of the General Assembly in 2009 approved **establishing the ICAPP Secretariat office in Seoul, the ROK**. Thanks to the outstanding management by the Secretariat, devoted far-reaching activities of the Secretary General and the full budgetary support of the ROK government for the Secretariat office, the ICAPP has been able to develop and expand their activities with accumulated records and high level efficiency.

Fourth, the ICAPP, originating in Asia, has been trying **to reach out to other regions in the world, especially to Latin America, Africa and Europe**. The ICAPP hosted the first Trilateral Conference among political parties in Asia, Africa and Latin America in April 2016. At the conference, the participants reaffirmed their commitment to the intent and spirit of the U.N. Charter for international peace and cooperation. In particular, they agreed to “urge their respective governments and parliaments to ratify immediately the Paris Agreement on Climate Change of 2016.” On July 9th 2017, the first Meeting of the Asia Europe Political Forum (AEPF) was held in Seoul, Korea, after the full discussion between the ICAPP and political groups of the European Parliament with its desirability to enhance the mutual understanding and cooperation. The first Meeting of the Political Forum with the European Parliament was attended by 28 Standing Committee members of the ICAPP and 11 European representatives from 3 political groups in European Parliament. Seoul Statement was adopted during the meeting, and the second Meeting was held in London, United Kingdom, during May 17-20, 2018.

Fifth, as part of efforts to strengthen ICAPP’s character as an intergovernmental institution, a **“Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Cooperation to Support the Activities of the ICAPP”** has been signed by the governments of eleven countries, i.e. Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Iran, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Mongolia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Vietnam. More governments may be able to join the MOU.

Finally, the ICAPP could be **an effective tool in delivering the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** adopted by the U.N. General Assembly in 2015, by strengthening the means of implementation and revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development. The SDG outcome document and UNESCO Executive Board's decision specifically acknowledge the essential role of national parliaments for the success of the 2030 agenda through their enactment of legislation and adoption of budgets. Given that parliaments are composed of representatives of political parties, enhanced awareness and increased participation of political parties representing the grassroots voices will translate into effective **implementation of the 2030 Agenda as well as UNESCO's conventions and recommendations.**

Partnership between the ICAPP and UNESCO would provide valuable opportunity of practical cooperation. The ICAPP will be able to reflect and implement objectives and priorities of UNESCO in its agenda and program of activities. The cooperation with UNESCO may be consolidated particularly through the exchange of regional and national experience in policy programming and make laws on UNESCO-related areas as well as facilitation of ratifying international conventions on the issues within the UNESCO ambit. The ICAPP will continue to play a key role not only in building a cohesive community in Asia, but also in the global quest for a more peaceful, prosperous and culturally diverse world.

In 2008, the ICAPP Standing Committee agreed to establish the ICAPP Secretariat in Seoul, Korea, and nominated Mr. Chung Eui-yong, then Member of the National Assembly of Korea and Former Ambassador, as Co-Chairman of the ICAPP Standing Committee and Secretary General of the ICAPP, which was endorsed at the 5th General Assembly in 2009. Since January 2018, Amb. Park Ro-byug was appointed as Secretary General. The ICAPP Secretariat can be reached by email at secretariat@theicapp.org. More detailed information on the ICAPP and its activities can be found on its website at www.theicapp.org.