

3RD REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVES
November 11-13, 2021

“Advancing and Realizing Alternative Regionalism: Southeast Asian Peoples’ Solidarity and Resistance in COVID-19 Times.”

Background

The COVID-19 pandemic lays bare the structural inequality and the broken capitalist system in place in Southeast Asian countries. The malady underscores the moral bankruptcy of governments and its regional body, the Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN), to effectively respond to a global health emergency. Given the weak public health care systems, sub-standard health infrastructure, and the absence of universal social protection of the many poor and marginalized communities, the ineptitude of many of these state leaders is also further revealed by the COVID vaccine apartheid which continues to unfold within and across countries, perpetuated by the interests of big pharmaceutical companies and privatized healthcare systems.

As countries suffer the different variations of a lockdown, the pandemic has been weaponized by many authoritarian regimes to consolidate their power over their citizens and fortify their neo-liberal policies and programs. In other words, with the exponential rise of COVID-19 cases in the region with no hopes yet of flattening the curve, the creeping authoritarian tendencies of ASEAN leaders intensify in the midst of an alarming economic downturn. This shrinking of the democratic space is manifested in the Burmese military junta, the Thai junta, the Indonesian government’s railroading of the passage of the Omnibus Law, the Philippine government’s passing of the Anti-terror Law, and the Malaysian and Cambodian governments’ increasing reliance on military powers to concentrate political and economic power, among others.

Nevertheless, these multiple crises also provided an opportunity for communities to demonstrate their cross-border solidarity, resistance, and collective action through their alternative practices. These grassroots communities actively chart a path towards an alternative mode of regional integration that embraces and privileges the principles of solidarity, social cohesion, cooperation, mutual benefit, and the commons principle.

This year, the 3rd Regional Conference on Alternatives responds to the crises and opportunities brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Towards a people-centered, people-led post-COVID-19 Southeast Asia, the conference will gather diverse peoples from across the region and beyond to advance and realize an alternative regionalism rooted in the alternative practices and experiences of communities from below. A regional movement that is hoped to carry on the vision will discuss and plan strategic direction, drawing on the lessons from one another and from the global alternatives movements.

Objectives

Themed “Advancing and Realizing Alternative Regionalism: Southeast Asian Peoples’ Solidarity and Resistance in COVID-19 Times,” the conference aims to meet the following objectives:

1. To identify concrete steps/action points towards a regional movement of alternatives
2. To highlight peoples’ alternatives that withstood and developed amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and their critical responses to the situation
3. To harness and consolidate people-to-people and cross-border solidarity through diverse platforms of engagement
4. To strengthen networks and explore new linkages towards a global alternatives movement

Program

November 11-13, 2021

(Starting times per day)

- 11:30 AM: New Delhi
- 12:30 PM: Yangon
- 1:00 PM: Jakarta, Hanoi, Bangkok, Phnom Penh
- 2:00 PM: Manila, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Hongkong
- 3:00 PM: Dili, Darwin

Day 1: 11 November 2021

Time (Manila)	Activity	Speaker
2:00 - 2:10 PM	Introduction and Reminders	
2:10 - 2:20 PM	Opening: Cultural Performance The Village by Jess Santiago	Asian Music for Peoples' Peace and Progress (aMP3) Southeast Asia
2:20 - 2:35 PM	Welcome Remarks	Maria Cynthia Rose B. Bautista, Ph.D. , Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs University of the Philippines
2:35 - 2:50 PM	Keynote Address	Dr. Eduardo Tadem UP CIDS AltDev, Philippines
2:50 - 3:05 PM	Keynote Address	Dr. Rosalinda Ofreneo Homenet SEA, Southeast Asia
3:05 - 3:25 PM	The political economic critique of the COVID-19 crisis and government response	Dr. Jomo Sundaram Malaysia
3:25 - 3:40 PM	Open Forum 1	
3:40 - 3:45 PM	Cultural Performance Drag art as a Cultural Alternative	ASEAN SOGIE Caucus Southeast Asia
Panel Discussion: Peoples' responses/ strategies during the pandemic and other crises: Cases of solidarity-based practices among the peoples that materialized even without sufficient support from governments		
3:45 - 4:05 PM	Viability of peoples' market/solidarity economy	Sastro Ma'ruf Konfederasi Pergerakan Rakyat Indonesia
4:05 - 4:25 PM	Initiatives of communities as health workers	Dr. Cynthia Maung Mae Tao Clinic, Thai-Burma border
4:25 - 4:45 PM	Effectiveness of political protests/ strikes during the pandemic (emphasis on political alternative)	Agustiana Serikat Petani Pasundan, Indonesia
4:45 - 5:00 PM	Open Forum 2	
Moderators: Raquel Castillo, SPELL (Philippines) and Dong Huy Cuong, VPDF (Vietnam)		

Day 2: 12 November 2021**5 Parallel Sessions**

Session 1: Education/ pedagogy during the pandemic both in urban and remote places (current problems, good practices during COVID-19 times)		
Time (Manila)	Activity	Speaker
2:00 - 2:10 PM	Welcoming Remarks and Reminders	
2:10 - 2:15 PM	Opening: Cultural Performance Drag art as a Form of Protest	ASEAN SOGIE Caucus Southeast Asia
2:20 - 2:30 PM	Reading of Solidarity Messages	
2:30 - 2:35 PM	Instructions for the Session	
2:35 - 2:50 PM	Presentation 1	Children's Development Center (CDC) Thai-Burma Border
2:50 - 3:05 PM	Presentation 2	Annabelle Jayco Sustainability and Participation through Education and Lifelong Learning (SPELL), Philippines
3:05 - 3:24 PM	Panel Discussion	Reactors: Dr. Khamphoui Saythalat Participatory Development Knowledge Agency (PAKA), Laos Saophorn Phoeng VOICE Cambodia ASEAN SOGIE Caucus
3:24 - 4:10 PM	Open Forum and Workshop	
4:10 - 4:20 PM	Synthesis and Reporting of Workshop Outputs	<i>Assigned Rapporteur per Session</i>
4:20 - 4:25 PM	Closing and Announcement of Day 3 Activity	
Moderators: Dr. Andrew Aeria, CIVICA Research (Malaysia), and Honey Tabiola, UP CIDS AltDev (Philippines)		

Session 2: Local food movements, pantries, kitchens, gardens, and the importance of health, food, and nutrition		
Time (Manila)	Activity	Speaker
2:00 - 2:10 PM	Welcoming Remarks and Reminders	
2:10 - 2:15 PM	Opening: Cultural Performance Drag art as a Form of Protest	ASEAN SOGIE Caucus Southeast Asia
2:20 - 2:30 PM	Reading of Solidarity Messages	
2:30 - 2:35 PM	Instructions for the Session	
2:35 - 2:50 PM	Presentation 1	Rudi Casrudi GESLA Food Solidarity Movement - Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria (KPA), Indonesia
2:50 - 3:05 PM	Presentation 2	Supa Yaimuang Sustainable Agriculture Network, Thailand
3:05 - 3:24 PM	Panel Discussion	Reactors: <i>TBA (Community Pantry Practitioner from Philippines)</i> <i>Leo Soares</i> <i>Uniaun Agrikultores Ermera</i> <i>(UNAER), Timor Leste</i>
3:24 - 4:10 PM	Open Forum and Workshop	
4:10 - 4:20 PM	Synthesis and Reporting of Workshop Outputs	<i>Assigned Rapporteur per Session</i>
4:20 - 4:25 PM	Closing and Announcement of Day 3 Activity	
Moderators: Jenito Jewata Santana, KSI (Timor Leste), and Rizki Estrada, KPRI (Indonesia)		

Session 3: Community-based healthcare practices		
Time (Manila)	Activity	Speaker
2:00 - 2:10 PM	Welcoming Remarks and Reminders	
2:10 - 2:15 PM	Opening: Cultural Performance Drag art as a Form of Protest	ASEAN SOGIE Caucus Southeast Asia
2:20 - 2:30 PM	Reading of Solidarity Messages	
2:30 - 2:35 PM	Instructions for the Session	
2:35 - 2:50 PM	Presentation 1	Thippawan Mokpa and Theera Watcharapranee Asian Health Institute, Thailand
2:50 - 3:05 PM	Presentation 2	Sandyawan Sumardi Jaringan Relawan Kemanusiaan, Indonesia
3:05 - 3:24 PM	Panel Discussion	Reactors: <i>Representative (Timor Leste)</i> <i>Marivic Atacador,</i> <i>Bantay Kalusugan (BKP),</i> <i>Philippines</i>
3:24 - 4:10 PM	Open Forum and Workshop	
4:10 - 4:20 PM	Synthesis and Reporting of Workshop Outputs	<i>Assigned Rapporteur per Session</i>
4:20 - 4:25 PM	Closing and Announcement of Day 3 Activity	
Moderators: Dr. Ben Quinones, ASEC (Philippines) and Putheavy OI, aMP3 (Cambodia)		

Session 4: Diverse forms of cross-border solidarity during the pandemic		
Time (Manila)	Activity	Speaker
2:00 - 2:10 PM	Welcoming Remarks and Reminders	
2:10 - 2:15 PM	Opening: Cultural Performance Drag art as a Form of Protest	ASEAN SOGIE Caucus Southeast Asia
2:20 - 2:30 PM	Reading of Solidarity Messages	
2:30 - 2:35 PM	Instructions for the Session	
2:35 - 2:50 PM	Presentation 1	Ashish Kothari Vikalp Sangam and Global Tapestry of Alternatives, India
2:50 - 3:05 PM	Presentation 2	Johnson Yeung Milk Tea Alliance, Hongkong
3:05 - 3:24 PM	Panel Discussion	Reactors: Workers Information Center Cambodia Khaing Zar Confederation of Trade Unions, Myanmar
3:24 - 4:10 PM	Open Forum and Workshop	
4:10 - 4:20 PM	Synthesis and Reporting of Workshop Outputs	<i>Assigned Rapporteur per Session</i>
4:20 - 4:25 PM	Closing and Announcement of Day 3 Activity	
Moderators: Suntaree Saeng-ging, Homenet (Thailand) and Benjie Velasco, UP CIDS AltDev (Philippines)		

Session 5: Community responses in the midst of a climate emergency		
Time (Manila)	Activity	Speaker
2:00 - 2:10 PM	Welcoming Remarks and Reminders	
2:10 - 2:15 PM	Opening: Cultural Performance Drag art as a Form of Protest	ASEAN SOGIE Caucus Southeast Asia
2:20 - 2:30 PM	Reading of Solidarity Messages	
2:30 - 2:35 PM	Instructions for the Session	
2:35 - 2:50 PM	Presentation 1	Speaker (TBD) Southern Peasants Federation of Thailand
2:50 - 3:05 PM	Presentation 2	Speaker (TBD) Green Innovation and Development Centre, Vietnam
3:05 - 3:24 PM	Panel Discussion	Reactors: (TBC) Donald Takhell on Loktak Lake issue (Manipur, Northeast India) <i>TBA (IP Leader from Cotabato, % Focus on the Global South - Philippines)</i>
3:24 - 4:10 PM	Open Forum and Workshop	Moderators
4:10 - 4:20 PM	Synthesis and Reporting of Workshop Outputs	<i>Assigned Rapporteur per Session</i>
4:20 - 4:25 PM	Closing and Announcement of Day 3 Activity	
Moderators: Koko da Costa Pinto, FHTL (Timor Leste) and Milk Tea Alliance		

Day 3: Cultural Solidarity: The role of culture and arts in advancing Southeast Asian society

Time (Manila)	Activity	Resource Speakers
2:00 - 2:10 PM	Introduction	
2:10 - 2:35 PM	Part 1 Presentation of Summary/Recap of Day 2 Workshop Results	Moderators
2:35 - 2:50 PM	Part 2 Overview: Role of Culture and Arts in advancing Alternative Regionalism	Dr. Eduardo Tadem UP CIDS AltDev, Philippines
2:50 - 3:00 PM	Performance 1	Sitio San Roque Youth
3:00 - 3:10 PM	Presentation	Bae Merlina Dumotan Panalsalan-Dagumbaan Tribal Association (PADATA), Philippines
3:10 - 3:25 PM	Performance 2	Lumad Bakwit School Students Save Our Schools (SOS) Network, Philippines
3:25 - 3:45 PM	Presentation	Dr. Chi Suwichan Asian Music for Peoples' Peace and Progress (AMP3), Southeast Asia
3:45 - 3:55 PM	Performance 3	Asian Music for Peoples' Peace and Progress Southeast Asia
3:55 - 4:15 PM	Presentation	Nguyen Le Nguyen (Jack) Vietnam Loc Huynh (Babel) Vietnam Minn Khant Zinn (Walkie Talkie) Myanmar
4:15 - 4:25 PM	Performance 4	ASEAN SOGIE Caucus Myanmar
4:25 - 4:45 PM	Open Forum	
4:45 - 4:55 PM	Closing Ceremony: Tribute to heroes	<i>AV Presentation % Communications Team</i>
4:55 - 5:00 PM	Online Protest	All participants
Moderators: Jose Monfred Sy, UP CIDS AltDev (Philippines) and Marc Batac, Milk Tea Alliance (Southeast Asia)		

