

Tokyo Democracy Forum (TDF) 2021

15 - 16 February 2021

10 Recommendations for Action

We, the participants of the Tokyo Democracy Forum (TDF) 2021, adopt the followings recommendations based on the research and discussions regarding how to defend and promote civic space and democracy in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic in Asia.

1. Fundamental freedoms and human rights such as freedom of expression, assembly and association must not be violated in the pretext of the emergency measures under the COVID-19 pandemic;
2. Social security and safety net such as a universal social protection need to be promoted as a way to ensure the basic economic and social rights of the vulnerable people in a society;
3. Internet freedom and internet security need to be ensured to tackle the challenges such as misinformation and disinformation during the COVID-19 Pandemic;
4. International solidarity among people and civil society organizations needs to be strengthened to tackle the widening economic inequality within and among the countries, in particular, vaccine inequality;
5. More effective communication and coordination among CSOs need to be promoted both domestically and internationally in the collective response to the impact and recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic;
6. The digitally innovative methods of ensuring the compliance with the basic benchmarks of a democratic election during the COVID-19 pandemic need to be developed;
7. Citizen-generated data for participatory monitoring, research and advocacy linked to SDGs framework needs to be promoted in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic;
8. Civic space needs to be ensured to promote inclusive partnership where civil society actors can play a key role as an equal partner;
9. Regional organizations such as the Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN) and South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) need to protect and promote civic space and enabling environment for civil society organizations in cooperation with respective governments; and,
10. Transparency and accountability on multilateral and bilateral development cooperation agencies such as the Asia Development Bank (ADB), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) need to be strengthened for effective development cooperation.