

THE RIGHT TO HUMAN SECURITY IS THE RIGHT TO PEACE

GPPAC-SEA Statement on the Celebration of the International Day of Peace

Today, September 21st, the community of nations and the peoples of the world commemorate the International Day of Peace, with the UN's theme "The Right of Peoples to Peace".

In the face of continuing oppression of Muslim Rohingyas and other indigenous ethnic peoples in Burma, martial law in Thailand and unabated political repression in Cambodia, Laos and Malaysia, the wars and the deaths of hundreds of thousands in Syria, Libya and Iraq, the persistent killings and violence in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Congo, Mali and South Sudan, as well as the brewing tensions in Sabah and the South China Sea, we wonder how much we can celebrate. However, starting from the realization that we have not done enough, today, it is important for us to renew our commitment and reinforce our efforts for peace.

We, the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) in Southeast Asia, join the global network of peace activists all around the globe in calling for a human security-approach to peace building and conflict prevention.

We join the call of peoples for all governments and multilateral institutions to put an end to the sufferings of peoples affected by conflicts and to put human security first.

It is true that the lack of peace contributes to peoples and communities being more insecure. However we assert that the latter is not the root of the former, rather the social, political, cultural, economic and ecological insecurities of people and communities results into conflict and the lack of peace. There is no peace because there is no human security.

Poverty, hunger, climate change, widening inequality, health pandemics, the denial of access to resources and political space, and the continuing violation of basic human rights continue to haunt the majority of the world's population and affect most the vulnerable sectors – the poor, women, children, indigenous peoples, cultural and religious minorities, people with disabilities and special needs – making their lives and their future more insecure. This is the root of conflict.

In the face of the worsening impacts of climate change and given the current lack of political will among the world's most powerful nations, these tensions and disputes over land and key natural resources between and within communities and nations will only continue to intensify. There is no other moment to act but now.

If we truly value and celebrate peace, then we have to face the root of these conflicts head on.

Today, we make a stand. Our people have had enough of sufferings. Uphold the right of all peoples to live in freedom and self-worth; free from fear, poverty, want and indignity. Uphold the right of all peoples to peace!

#HumanSecurityFirst!