DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

20 YEARS POST-ADOPTION

20 years after the Declaration was adopted, some progress in protecting Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) has been made. Discussions about DRAFTING AND IMPLEMENTING LAWS AND POLICIES to ensure the protection of HRDs are being held in a few Asian countries.

There are some states that now RECOGNISE AND PROVIDE SUPPORT TO DEFENDERS. This progress has been possible through the work of defenders, who for 20 years or more, have tirelessly defended and promoted human rights in Asia and beyond.

DESPITE THESE POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS, THE VIOLATION OF HRDs’ RIGHTS DOES REMAIN RAMPANT AND MUCH WORKS REMAINS TO BE DONE IN IMPLEMENTING THE DECLARATION. BETWEEN JANUARY 2017 AND JUNE 2018, FORUM-ASIA DOCUMENTED*: 

*the data may not represent all violation against HRDs happening in Asia

465 cases of rights violation against HRDs across 17 Asian countries

3400 HRDs, including NGOs were affected as a result

CATEGORIES OF W/HRDS MOST AFFECTED

PRO-DEMOCRACY ACTIVIST
NGO/NGO STAFF
WHRD
COMMUNITY-BASED HRD (LAND & ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENDERS)
JOURNALIST

MOST COMMON FORMS OF VIOLATIONS COMMITTED AGAINST W/HRDS

JUDICIAL HARRASSMENT
ARBITRARY ARREST AND DETENTION
INTIMIDATION AND THREATS
VIOLENCE
ADMINISTRATIVE HARASSMENT

HOW CAN WE USE THE DECLARATION TO STRENGTHEN THE PROTECTION OF HRDs?

URGE STATES TO RESPECT AND COMPLY with international human rights laws and standards

DEMAND STATES TO ESTABLISH THE NECESSARY MECHANISMS for the effective protection of defenders

Play an ACTIVE ROLE in collaboration with other HRD communities, to POPULARISE the Declaration, HIGHLIGHT the importance of HRDs’ work, and the challenges they face

Continue to STRENGTHEN AND BUILD UPON the work others have done in pushing for this Declaration to be implemented

FORUM-ASIA recognises the need to address the on-going violations against and criminalisation of HRDs, who play a key role in ensuring that everyone’s human rights are protected and fulfilled. To this end, on the 20th year anniversary of the Declaration on HRDs, FORUM-ASIA is producing visual materials that emphasise the importance of HRDs and their contributions, the rights they have, and the responsibilities of others towards HRDs, under the Declaration.