Madam President, FORUM-ASIA welcomes the Special Rapporteur’s report on defenders operating in conflict and post-conflict settings and echoes his concerns on the extreme hostilities they face. Examples of this include the arbitrary arrest and detention of hundreds of HRDs in Indian-administered, Jammu and Kashmir during the on-going blockade; the spate of killings of HRDs in increasingly militarised areas of the Philippines; and intimidation and threats against HRDs in West Papua.

We also share the Special Rapporteur’s concerns on the heightened risks faced by particular groups such as HRDs based in remote areas that have high exposure to risk but limited access to protection mechanisms, and WHRDs who face gender-based harassment. For example, in the past few years, a group of WHRDs working to highlight human rights violations in Southern Thailand were targeted with smear campaigns that vilified them through sexist and misogynist language.

We also appreciate the Special Rapporteur’s report on his visit to Mongolia and agree with his concerns on threats and intimidation against land and environmental rights defenders. These include multiple threats against defenders from the “Save Onon River” movement and the attack against Ms Mungunkhun Dulmaa, who in 2018 was detained and sexually harassed by the security personnel of Steppe Gold company for protesting against their mining operation. These cases demonstrate the urgent need for comprehensive and robust legislations and policies for the protection of HRDs in Mongolia that are consistent with international human rights standards.

Lastly, we are alarmed by the growing trend of harassment and attacks against HRDs by religious extremists, particularly by non-state actors with tacit support from the state as in Maldives, India and Sri Lanka, and the use of Strategic Lawsuits against Public Participation (SLAPP) by business corporations as in Thailand. What steps would the Special Rapporteur recommend to combat such forms of harassment and attacks? Thank you.

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2. Examples of cases can be found in: [FORUM-ASIA’s database](https://www.forum-asia.org/?p=29947)
3. Examples of cases can be found in: [FORUM-ASIA’s database](https://www.forum-asia.org/?p=29947)