

ASEAN Grassroots People's Assembly People's Statement

Friday 16 November 2012, by [AGPA](#) (Date first published: 15 November 2012).

We, the ASEAN Grassroots People's Assembly (AGPA), are farmers, fisher-folk, forestry activists, land activists, indigenous people, feminists, labour activists, sex workers, youth activists, anti-eviction activists, anti-capitalism activists, LGBTIQ activists, activists impacted by dam projects, artists and singers. We are here with our regional allies and friends. We are not an anti-government Assembly. We are people who love peace and are committed to active non-violence. We believe in people's human rights and human dignity and that is why we have organized our Assembly.

Our Assembly is timed to raise people's voices and issues to the Royal Government of Cambodia, ASEAN heads of state and other international leaders ahead of the 21st ASEAN Summit on 18-20th November 2012.

AGPA is a four-day event to bring grassroots peoples together in solidarity with each other, in the struggle for social justice, a better life and a better society for everyone. Together we have shared our problems and we see the solutions. We know that when people and governments work together, good and lasting solutions can be found. This is the goal of our Assembly.

On Day 1 of AGPA we experienced a block on our freedom of assembly. This blocking continues. On Day 2, in our different workshops, where we discussed our issues together to make this statement, we experienced further attempts to suppress our basic freedoms— freedom of assembly and freedom of association. But we are here today and we wish to present the reality of our lives, and the strength of our hopes and dreams for our future in Cambodia and in ASEAN.

Leaders: we are talking to you, hear our voices, hear our problems!

We, the people, are part of the solution. We are not part of the problem. We want to work with you to solve our problems.

Recommendations

1. Labor sector (formal, informal, migrant workers)

- We demand labor law enforcement in Cambodia
- We demand the rights to freedom of association and assembly without facing violence
- We demand a fair living wage for workers and civil servants regularly adjusted to inflation
- We demand effective and transparent public services in Cambodia
- We demand an end to fixed duration contracts
- We demand investment which enables informal sector workers to earn decent livelihoods

- We demand recognition and respect for the negotiation rights of informal sector workers
- We demand a social security fund for informal sector workers
- We demand a lower gasoline price in Cambodia like in neighboring countries.
- We demand that migrant workers have the rights to form and join unions
- We demand that ASEAN Governments recognize and enforce the human rights of migrant worker; migrant workers must be entitled to equal wages and other public services like local workers
- Sex workers demand freedom of movement for all peoples in ASEAN
Sex work is work. We must change laws and policies in all ASEAN countries to protect the rights of sex workers including LGBT sex workers.
- We, tuk-tuk and motordop drivers, demand an end of motor and bicycle rental in tourism places.

2. Land

- We demand that governments assess and redress the negative impacts of economic land concessions
- We demand an end to forced evictions and implementation of on-site development
- We demand an end to the manipulation of the judicial system and the violence perpetrated by state and non-state actors, which criminalize and attack human rights defenders and land activists.
- We, members of evicted communities, demand the Cambodian government to issue us our official citizens legal documentation (family book, ID cards) so that we can access land title and land compensation
- We demand the release of human rights and land activists in prison
- We demand that Cambodia respect human rights, democracy and stop discriminating against the poor.
- We demand that governments develop policy and laws related to land, mining and hydro-power dams, which serve the interest of people.
- We demand the cancelation of economic land concessions policies in ASEAN countries
- We demand that ASEAN develops mechanisms and policies for land redistribution to the people
- We demand ASEAN government to protect areas of rich biodiversity.
- We demand development policies in the ASEAN region respect and promote people's participation, citizen rights, and do not cause forced eviction and discrimination against the poor.
- We ask ASEAN government release a joint statement calling for resolution of land conflicts in ASEAN

3. Food security and sovereignty

- We demand fair markets and fair prices for our products.

- We demand micro credit from the government with 2% interest rate per year
- We demand agricultural technical support from the government.
- We reject any agricultural law which contradicts our Constitution and land laws.
- We demand laws to protect equal bargaining power between smallhold agricultural producers and purchasers/traders

4. Trade and Investment

- We demand development shall not put people into extreme poverty.
- Trade and investment should first and foremost strengthen the local economy, local production, human capacity and well-being of the people. Profits of investors should not come before the interests of the people.
- We demand universal access to health care and for our countries to have the rights to produce their own generic medicines
- We urge the government to implement the laws and regulations which enhance both the quality of education and employment.
- ASEAN governments should build a regional community through justice and peace, not through extraction, destruction and exploitation.
- Governments must act to advance the interests of the peoples in their countries and not of corporations and elites
- National and regional trade and investment policies must promote food sovereignty, decent work, protection of natural resources and life with dignity for all peoples
- The development model pursued by ASEAN governments must be redirected by putting people, equality, environment and society before corporate and elite interests.

5. Human Rights and Democracy

- We demand an independent judiciary in Cambodia
- We reject the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration in its current form
- We demand justice for indigenous peoples
- We demand that all laws and policies that directly and indirectly criminalize SOGI be repealed immediately, and LGBTIQ rights are recognized as human rights, and national laws, policies and practices are harmonized with the Yogyakarta Principles.

15 November 2012

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