

Press Release

November 28, 2019

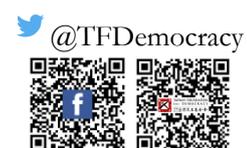
The Diplomacy Training Program Receives the 2019 Asia Democracy and Human Rights Award

The Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (TFD) announced today that the 2019 Asia Democracy and Human Rights Award will be awarded to the Diplomacy Training Program.

Established in 1989, DTP was founded by HE José Ramos-Horta, (1996 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and former President of Timor-Leste) and University of New South Wales Emeritus Professor Garth Nettheim. The Diplomacy Training Program (DTP) is an independent, non-government organization (NGO) providing education in human rights advocacy based in Sydney, Australia. It seeks to advance human rights and empower civil society in the Asia Pacific region through quality training and by building the skills and capacities of advocates in the Asia-Pacific and MENA region. Since January 1990, it has trained more than 3,000 human rights defenders from more than 60 countries, launched 25 Annual Regional Training Programs for Asia-Pacific NGO leaders, and undertaken over 100 specific country- and thematic trainings in countries including Australia, Bangladesh, East Timor, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Thailand, Qatar, and UAE.

According to the DTP, its vision is a world in which all people have the freedom to advocate for the promotion and protection of human rights and are able to realise their human rights and achieve dignity, and its mission to build the knowledge, skills, networks and capacities of those working to advance human rights. The DTP believes that skills in advocacy, diplomacy and communication, networking and alliance building, together with sound knowledge of internationally agreed human rights standards and inter-governmental systems, enables human rights defenders to do their work more effectively.

In establishing DTP, Mr. José Ramos-Horta wanted to share his



hard-gained knowledge and experience with others. He understood the power of peaceful advocacy and ‘people’s diplomacy’. He saw the need to help human rights defenders use the available international standards and mechanisms and to mobilize civil society and international solidarity to seek effective redress for human rights abuses.

Each year DTP partners with NGOs in Asia and the Pacific to deliver an annual comprehensive human rights and advocacy course, bringing together participants working on many different human rights issues – discrimination against LGBTI + individuals and communities, violence against women, Indigenous peoples rights, the right to self-determination, the rights of persons with “disabilities”, activists campaigning against poverty and homelessness, torture, political killings and the death penalty. The strength of this program is in providing a common framework and expanded horizons for activists working on many causes, enabling them to build their links and networks.

At the announcement press conference today, TFD President Ford Fu-Te Liao said the DTP has many in common with the TFD in terms of our efforts in offering resources and training to human rights activists and democracy advocates. “We hope the award could facilitate future exchanges concerning human rights and democracy between the DTP and the TFD,” he added.

Article 2 of the TFD’s “Guidelines of the Asia Democracy and Human Rights Award” states that “[supporting] democratic development and promote human rights in the Asia region” is the foundational mission for establishing the Award.

Dr. Sima Samar, one of the final review panelists and the 2008 Asia Democracy and Human Rights Award laureate, said the work of this organization “has to be promoted and recognized” as they are “training the human resource in Asia,” and the people who gets the training in this program “become the actual force and source of change for promotion, protection and fulfillment of the human rights in their respective countries.”

Dr. Shin Hae Bong, President of Japan’s Human Rights Now, also a final review panelist for this year’s Award, said the DTP’s “record of

training over 3,000 advocates for human rights, peace and democracy, made possible through the involvement of committed DTP trainers and partner organizations across the Middle East, Asia, and the Pacific, is impressive,” as such contribution to capacity-building and empowerment will have long-term impact on the promotion and protection of human rights in each country and region.

The Diplomacy Training Program was named the Award winner by a two-stage reviewing process (See Annex I). The TFD convened a preliminary review panel meeting facilitated by TFD President Ford Fu-Te Liao to discuss and shortlist the finalists. The five finalists’ names and credentials were then sent to the final review panel for a final decision. This year’s nominees included individuals and organizations from Australia, East Turkestan, Philippines, and the U.S. that make respective contributions in the fields pertaining to human rights and democracy promotion, religious plurality and freedom, and refugee support.

The Taiwan Foundation for Democracy will host its 14th Annual Asia Democracy and Human Rights Award on December 10th, 2019, the International Human Rights Day at Taipei Guest House. The DTP delegation will come to Taipei to receive the award. The Asia Democracy and Human Rights Award includes an award trophy and a grant of US\$100,000 to support the organization’s continuous efforts and contribution to the consolidation of democracy.

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Annex I

Preliminary Review Panel

1. Mr. Kao Yu-Jen, Chairman, 21st Century Foundation
2. Dr. Wei Chien-Feng, Supervisory Board Member, Taiwan Foundation for Democracy
3. Dr. Michael Hsin-Huang Hsiao, Distinguished Research Fellow, Institute of Sociology, Academia Sinica
4. Dr. Lin Chiung-Chu, Director, the Chang Fo-Chuan Center for the Study of Human Rights at Soochow University
5. Ms. Chi Hui-jung, Chief Executive, Garden of Hope Foundation
6. Ms. Rebecca Wang, Chairperson, Taiwan Aid
7. Dr. Ford Fu-Te Liao, President, Taiwan Foundation for Democracy

Final Review Panel

1. Dr. Sima Samar, Dr. Sima Samar, Chairperson, Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission / Laureate, 2008 Asia Democracy and Human Rights Award
2. Mr. Derek Mitchell, President, National Democratic Institute
3. Mr. Arch Puddington, Distinguished Fellow for Democracy Studies, Freedom House
4. Mr. Pierre Haski, President, Reporters Without Borders
5. Dr. Shin Hae Bong, President, Human Rights Now
6. Hon. Su Jia-chyuan, Chairman, Taiwan Foundation for Democracy
7. Dr. Ford Fu-Te Liao, President, Taiwan Foundation for Democracy