Conclusions of the 36th Meeting of the ICAPP Standing Committee
(Online Conference, 3 September 2021)

The 36th Meeting (hereinafter referred to as "the Meeting") of the Standing Committee (hereinafter referred to as "the SC") of the International Conference of Asian Political Parties (hereinafter referred to as "the ICAPP") was held on 3 September 2021 as an online conference due to travel restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Meeting began and closed with remarks by Hon. Jose de Venecia, Jr., Founder of the ICAPP and Co-Chairperson of the ICAPP Standing Committee, former Speaker of the House of Representatives of Philippines, and was presided by Hon. Cho Byung-jae, Secretary General of the ICAPP.

Documents for the Meeting, including the program, list of participants, list of speakers, annotated agenda, and rules of procedure are attached as ***Appendix I-1*** through ***I-5***.

Issues Relating to the ICAPP Standing Committee (SC)

Incentive Mechanism for Serving as Additional Vice-Chairperson

Following the consensus reached among the SC Bureau members during the 32nd SC Meeting, adopted as the 18th Major Understanding, the SC Member who hosts the General Assembly, the largest event of the ICAPP, would be granted a chance to serve as a SC Bureau Member for one term.

In this regard, SC Members agreed that the term of Hon. Dr. Andrey Klimov, Deputy Secretary General of the United Russia Party on International Affairs, as a Vice Chairperson of the ICAPP Standing Committee will be maintained until the 11th General Assembly takes place in Istanbul, the Republic of Turkey.

The updated list of the SC Members is attached as ***Appendix II***.

Next Meeting of the SC

During the Meeting, Hon. Afif Demirkiran, Deputy Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Department of *AK Parti*, reconfirmed *the AK Parti's* offer to host the 11th GA along with other sideline Meetings, including the next SC Meeting in Istanbul, the Republic of Turkey, in early 2022. In case the 11th GA cannot take place in the first half of 2022 for any reason, the next SC Meeting will be organized separately from the 11th GA in the first half of 2022.

Review of the ICAPP Activities since the 35th SC Meeting in April 2021

2nd Special Video Conference on COVID-19 Pandemic

The Secretariat reported that the 2nd Special Video Conference on COVID-19 Pandemic was held online on 25 May 2021.
The conference was attended by 24 political parties from 19 countries. 5 international organizations also joined the conference, which were Permanent Conference of Political Parties of Latin America and the Caribbean (COPPPAL), World Health Organization (WHO), and World Bank, International Vaccine Institute (IVI), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP).

The conference was divided into two sessions: the first Session focused on the topic of "Building a More Effective Regional and Global Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic"; the second Session focused on "Achieving an Inclusive Economic Recovery in the Post-COVID-19 Environment." Each session was attended by experts from international organizations: Dr. Takeshi Kasai, World Health Organization Regional Director for the Western Pacific, provided keynote presentation and facilitated Q&A Session in the first part of the Conference; Dr. Hoon Sahib Soh, Special Representative of the World Bank Group Korea Office, presented and facilitated Q&A session in the latter part of the Conference.

The participants adopted the "Statement of the 2nd Special Video Conference on the COVID-19 Pandemic," through which the participants committed to encouraging their respective governments to expand equitable access to medical supplies such as vaccines, diagnostics, and therapeutics across counties, underline close collaboration among public and private sectors to treat patients affected by COVID-19. The Statement also endorsed the need to cooperate with international organizations to coordinate emergency response and strengthen capacity of public health systems. It also emphasized the role of political parties in facilitating, envisioning, and adopting to the post-COVID-19 economic landscape.

The program, list of participants, and statement of the 2nd Special Video Conference on the COVID-19 pandemic are attached as ***Appendix III-1*** through ***III-3***.

ICAPP Work Program for 2021

SC Members agreed to the tentative ICAPP work program for the remainder of 2021, which had been prepared by the Secretariat.

a. *20th Anniversary of the ICAPP*

   The commemorative event of the 20th Anniversary of the ICAPP was initially planned to be held with the 11th General Assembly in Istanbul, Turkey, first in October 2020 and then in October 2021. However, as the 11th GA is to be postponed until 2022 due to COVID-19, the Secretariat recommended holding the commemorative event separately in either late October or early November 2021, through a virtual or hybrid format. During the Meeting, Members agreed to celebrate the event separately from the 11th GA, either virtually or through a hybrid form in early November 2021.

b. *Special Workshop on "Climate Change"*

Considering the importance of the issue of climate change, particularly after the publication of the Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) on the status of global climate change on 9 August 2021, it would be appropriate and desirable for the ICAPP to take up and express its serious interests in this issue. The Secretariat recommended holding a Special Workshop on "Climate Change" in either November or December 2021.

The ICAPP Work Program for the remainder of 2021 is attached as ***Appendix IV***.

Preparations for the 11th GA and Other Sideline Meetings

Plans for the 11th GA, 38th SC Meeting, ICAPP Media Forum, Trilateral Meeting of the ICAPP-COPPPAL-CAPP, and 2nd Meeting of the ICAPP Tourism Promotion and Inter-City Cooperation (TOPIC) Council

During the Meeting, Hon. Afif Demirkiran reiterated the party's offer to host the Meetings in Istanbul, Turkey. Hon. Demirkiran hoped that the 11th GA and the side Meetings would be held physically as soon as possible, perhaps in the early half of 2022.

To briefly review the past development of the 11th GA since the 34th SC Meeting, the *AK Parti* has offered to host the 11th GA in Istanbul, Turkey, along with the 20th Anniversary of the ICAPP, the ICAPP Media Forum, the Trilateral Meeting of the ICAPP-COPPPAL-CAPP, TOPIC Council Meeting, and the SC Meeting. The GA was scheduled to be held in 21-24 October 2021.

In the uncertainty of in-person Meetings under COVID-19, the Secretariat circulated a letter of survey to solicit opinions of the SC Members upon the in-person meeting of the 11th GA and its sideline Meetings. Most of the SC Members expressed that they would find it difficult to send delegations to Istanbul, Turkey this year. Upon this result, Hon. Efkan Ala, Deputy Chairman of *AK Parti* in charge of Foreign Affairs and Member of Parliament, sent a letter to the Secretariat on 19 August 2021 to defer the hosting of the 11th GA and its sideline Meetings to 2022.

The letter from the *AK Parti* dated 19 August 2021 is attached as ***Appendix V***.

Activities of the ICAPP-Affiliated Bodies

The 4th Meeting of the Asia-Europe Political Forum (AEPF)

During the Meeting, the Secretariat reported to the SC Members that Hon. Jan Zahradil, the European Co-Chairperson of the ICAPP-AEPF and Vice-Chair of the Committee on International Trade and Member of the European Parliament, and Hon. Daya Gamage, the Asian Co-Chairperson of the AEPF, Member of Parliament and Senior Deputy Chairman of the United National Party (UNP) proposed to postpone the 4th Meeting of the Asia-Europe Political Forum (AEPF) to Spring 2022, hoping for an in-person meeting.

Previuosly during the 35th SC Meeting, members agreed to postpone the 4th Meeting of the Asia-Europe Political Forum (AEPF) to the first or second week of November 2021, given the unfavorable situation in Europe due to the pandemic. The SC members also agreed to keep the term of the AEPF Bureau members until the 4th meeting of the AEPF.

On 12 July 2021, Hon. Jan Zahradil sent a letter to Hon. Cho Byung-jae to suggest either an online meeting of the 4th AEPF under the persisting pandemic, or a postponement to Spring 2022 with the hope that the situation will be different by then.

On 16 July 2021, Hon. Cho Byung-jae discussed the situation with Hon. Daya Gamage. During the conversation, Hon. Gamage suggested further postponement of the meeting, so to solidify a sense of connection and cooperation among the members of the ICAPP. Hon. Cho informed Hon. Zahradil of this opinion through the letter on 19 July 2021.

On 15 August 2021, Hon. Jan Zahradil wrote to the ICAPP Secretariat and proposed to hold the 4th AEPF meeting in person in Spring 2022. He also mentioned that the mandate of AEPF's Co-Chairs should be extended until the meeting takes place, so as to ensure that the preparations can resume smoothly once the circumstances allow us to do so.

The latest letter from Hon. Jan Zahradil is attached as ***Appendix VI.***

6th Meeting of the ICAPP Youth Wing and 7th Meeting of the ICAPP Women's Wing

During the Meeting, Hon. Saikhansanaa Khurelbaatar, Advisor to the Secretary General of the Mongolian People's Party and Vice President of the Social Democratic Mongolian Youth Association, reiterated the Mongolian People's Party's offer to host the 6th Meeting of the ICAPP Youth Wing and the 7th Meeting of the ICAPP Women's Wing in March 2022, while we observe the pandemic situation.

To briefly revisit the past development of the two meetings, in December 2019 the Mongolian People's Party (MPP) offered to host the 6th Meeting of the ICAPP Youth Wing and the 7th Meeting of the ICAPP Women's Wing in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. However, due to the spread of COVID-19, the two meetings were postponed. During the 34th SC Meeting, the MPP reconfirmed its will to host the two meetings in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia in October 2021.

On 28 June 2021, an online preliminary meeting was conducted between the ICAPP Secretariat and the MPP to review the relevant issues of the 6th Meeting of the ICAPP Youth Wing and the 7th Meeting of the ICAPP Women's Wing. Hon. Amarbayasgalan Dashzegve, Secretary General of the Mongolian People's Party, mentioned that although Mongolia has a high rate of vaccination and plans to open its border to host international guests, the spread of the coronavirus and its mutations are extremely worrisome, to which Hon. Cho Byung-jae also agreed. The MPP agreed to further inform the Secretariat of its decision on the time and format of the 6th Meeting of the ICAPP Youth Wing and the 7th Meeting of the ICAPP Women's Wing.

On 6 August 2021, the MPP sent a letter to the Secretariat and reconfirmed its offer to hold the 6th Meeting of the ICAPP Youth Wing and the 7th Meeting of the ICAPP Women's Wing in

Ulaanbaatar in person. However, due to the pandemic crisis, the Party rescheduled these two meetings to March 2022, while observing the situation of the pandemic.

The latest letter from the Mongolian People's Party is attached as ***Appendix VII***.

3rd Meeting of the Asian Cultural Council

During the Meeting, Hon. Khuon Sudary, Vice-Chairperson of the ICAPP Standing Committee, Chairperson of the ACC, Member of the Standing Committee of the CPP and Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Cambodia, emphasized the importance of culture and cooperation. Hon. Khuon Sudary stressed that we should further develop our cultural corridor to promote peace and harmony, share prosperity based on the principles of mutual respect, mutual learning, mutual trust, and mutual benefit. Hon. Khuon Sudary stated that the ACC has progressively worked on these principles. Hon. Khuon Sudary hence expressed her wish to hold the 3rd Meeting of the Asian Cultural Council in the first week of December in 2022.

In this regard, the Secretariat would like to remind the SC members that, according to the Terms of References of the ACC adopted at the 28th SC Meeting, the Asian Cultural Council is to be "held once a year or biannually with rotation among Asian Country Members to discuss various matters concerning culture and culture tourism initiative."

As a reminder to the SC Members, the 1st Meeting of the ACC was held in Siem Reap, the Kingdom of Cambodia on 15 January 2019. The 2nd Meeting of the ACC was co-hosted by the ICAPP and the Cambodian People's Party, and held as a video conference on 19 March 2021.

The Terms of References of the Asian Cultural Council is attached as ***Appendix VIII.***

ICAPP Special Conferences

Special Conference on "Security and Cooperation: Role of Political Parties"

During the Meeting, Hon. Ali Ahmadov, Deputy Prime Minister and Deputy Chairman of the New Azerbaijan Party, offered to hold "Special Conference on Security and Cooperation: Role of Political Parties" in September or October 2022. He said that the conference would provide options to resolve military conflicts, and promote the security and cooperation of countries and regions.

Previously during the 34th SC Meeting, the New Azerbaijan Party offered to host "Special Conference on Security and Cooperation: Role of Political Parties" in person in Baku, Azerbaijan. The conference was later scheduled to be held between 3-5 December 2021.

On 31 August 2021, the party informed the Secretariat that due to the worsening situation of the COVID-19 pandemic, it has no choice but to postpone the conference to 2022.

Special Conference on "Asia's Political Development through Political Parties"

During the Meeting, Hon. Ha Tae-keung, Member of the National Assembly, People Power Party, and Vice Chairperson of ICAPP Parliamentarians' Union of Korea, proposed to reschedule the Special Conference on "Asia's Political Development through Political Parties" in the later half of 2022.

Previously, the Conference was proposed to be co-hosted by People Power Party and the Democratic Party of the Republic of Korea, but it was postponed due to the aggravating situation of the pandemic.

Tentative Work Program for 2022

Following is the ICAPP's tentative work program for 2022:

a. *11th Meeting of the ICAPP General Assembly (Istanbul, Turkey, first half of 2022)*
   - *37th Meeting of the Standing Committee*
   - *5th Meeting of the ICAPP Media Forum*
   - *4th Trilateral Meeting among the ICAPP-COPPPAL-CAPP*
   - *2nd Meeting of the ICAPP Tourism Promotion and Inter-City Cooperation (TOPIC) Council*
b. *4th Meeting of Asia-Europe Political Forum (AEPF) (Prague, Czech Republic, Spring 2022)*
c. *6th Meeting of the ICAPP Youth Wing and 7th Meeting of the ICAPP Women's Wing (Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, March 2022)*
d. *Special Conference on "Security and Cooperation: Role of Political Parties" (Baku, Azerbaijan, September or October 2022)*
e. *Special Conference on "Asia's Political Development through Political Parties" (Seoul, Republic of Korea, Second Half of 2022)*
f. *3rd Meeting of the Asian Cultural Council (December 2022) [To be Confirmed]*
g. *38th Meeting of the Standing Committee [To be Confirmed]*
h. *5th Meeting of the IPDA Steering Committee [To be Confirmed]*

The ICAPP's tentative work program for 2022 is attached as ***Appendix IX.***

New Proposals and Other Issues

Proposals to hold Conferences on "Climate," "Intercultural and Interethnic Dialogue between People," and "Artificial Intelligence"

During the Meeting, Hon. Dr. Andrey Klimov proposed to hold a special event on climate issues in Sakhalin Island, Russia by the end of June 2022, as both an online and offline event. The purpose of the event would be to discuss the environmental safety and protection of nature.

Hon. Dr. Andrey Klimov also proposed to arrange an "International Conference on Intercultural and Interethnic Dialogue between People" in Saint Petersburg, Russia, in May 2022. Hon.

Klimov expressed that a joined meeting of the ICAPP Asian Cultural Council (ACC) in this event would be recommendable.

Further, Hon. Dr. Andrey Klimov proposed to pay attention to artificial intelligence. He stated that the discussion on artificial intelligence would be necessary to the ICAPP in light of the challenges that AI poses to democracy, and problems such as interferences in independent states.

In a subsequent conversation between Hon. Klimov and Hon. Cho Byung-jae, Hon. Klimov reconfirmed that the United Russia Party wishes to hold a Special Conference on Climate in the Russian Far East, by the end of June 2022. As for venue and timing of hosting the other two conferences, the United Russian Party is open to other SC Members' proposals.

Proposal to Revive the Meeting of the ICAPP Business Council

During the Meeting, Hon. Dr. Nalinee Taveesin, former Thailand Trade Representative, former Minister Attached to the Prime Minister's Office, *Pheu Thai* Party of Thailand, gave a brief summary on the business impact of COVID-19 on micro-, small, and medium enterprises and other businesses. Hon. Taveesin said that such issues are relevant to the ICAPP, since we create policies for short- and long-term measures and provide immediate responses.

Hon. Taveesin expressed her belief in the ICAPP's significant role in fostering cooperation amongst our members, including ICAPP's cooperation with AEPF, COPPPAL, CAPP, to empower and facilitate economic recovery throughout the time of crisis. As a pragmatic approach to achieving this, Hon. Taveesin proposed to revive the ICAPP Business Council that was initiated a few years ago in ICAPP but is now dormant.

Hon. Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Vice Chairperson and Special Rapporteur of the ICAPP Standing Committee and Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, Pakistan Muslim League-N, welcomed Hon. Taveesin's proposal, and said that it is a timely initiative to revive the ICAPP Business Council. He also said that Hon. Dr. Nalinee Taveesin would be the most appropriate person to push forward the Business Council's revival.

Hon. Daya Gamage, former Minister of Primary Industries and Social Empowerment of Sri Lanka, Member of Parliament and Senior Deputy Chairman of the United National Party (UNP), also embraced Hon. Taveesin's proposal on the ICAPP Business Council, and supported Hon. Mushahid Hussain Sayed's recommendation to have Hon. Taveesin to support the Council's revival.

Hon. Cho Byung-jae added that the Secretariat will revisit the issue and discuss the future plans for the revival of the ICAPP Business Council with SC Members as soon as possible.

For the reference of all the SC Members, the 1st Meeting of the ICAPP-COPPPAL Business Council was launched during the 5th Joint Session between the ICAPP Standing Committee and the COPPPAL Coordinating Body, which took place in Mexico City, Mexico, between 28-29 November 2014. The main duties of the Business Council were adopted to be: (1) laying out the blueprint or prospects of inter-continental cooperation in trade, investment, finance,

science and technology, environment, culture and people-to-people exchange, and (2) facilitating the harmonization of economic policy-making and private sector decisions through enhanced dialogues between representatives of the leading political parties and business leaders.

Outreach to More Political Parties

During the Meeting, Hon. Salman Khurshid suggested that ICAPP should reach out to more stakeholders and political parties in Asia who have not yet been included as ICAPP Members. Hon. Khurshid suggested that it would be helpful for the ICAPP to have a greater number of stakeholders to participate and support the efforts of the ICAPP.

Proposal to Launch a Campaign on "Vaccines without Borders"

During the Meeting, Hon. Mushahid Hussain Sayed stated that the vaccine distribution should be our priority in fighting against the borderless enemy of COVID-19. In this regard, he proposed to have a campaign led by political parties for "Vaccines without Borders" like "Doctors without Borders."

On Afghanistan

During the Meeting, some Members raised the need to discuss the situation in Afghanistan to help restore peace and stability in the region and secure people's safety.

Hon. Andrey Klimov expressed that the ICAPP should hold a meeting to discuss the situation to secure peace and stability in Afghanistan and the surrounding countries. Hon. Klimov proposed to have a conference regarding the issue as soon as possible, perhaps through an online format that we are all familiar with, preferably before the end of 2021.

Hon. Salman Khurshid, Senior Leader of the Indian National Congress Party, and Former Minister for External Affairs of India, also supported the idea to discuss the situation in Afghanistan through whichever form possible. He proposed that the focus should be on what can be done to restore peace and stability in the country.

Hon. Theo L. Sambuaga, Vice Chairperson of the Patron Council of *Golkar* Party, Former Minister of Manpower and Former Minister of Housing and Settlement of Indonesia, suggested to make an ICAPP statement regarding the situation in Afghanistan to promote safe and stability in the country.

Cooperation with the United Nations

ICAPP's Bid for the Observer Status in the UN General Assembly

Hon. Cho Byung-jae, the Secretary General of the ICAPP, briefed and updated the Members on the ICAPP's efforts to gain observer status in the UN General Assembly as follows:

Since the ICAPP had tried hard in vain to get observer status in the UN General Assembly (UNGA) between 2011 and 2016, the Secretariat has reviewed our strategy on this issue from scratch. It is the Secretariat's view that we need some more groundworks before we drive our full-fledged efforts in the future.

First, we need to consolidate ICAPP's identity as a "quasi-intergovernmental" organization. The UNGA adopted a decision in 1994 and a resolution in 1999 which stated that the granting of observer status should be confined to States and "intergovernmental" organizations. Even though the ICAPP is not an intergovernmental organization *per se*, it should be regarded as a quasi-intergovernmental one as its members are ruling or potential ruling parties of sovereign states. We need to develop this logic further and improve our activities in order to strengthen the ICAPP's *de-facto* intergovernmental nature.

Second, the ICAPP has concluded the "MOU on Cooperation to Support the Activities of the ICAPP" with governments to reinforce the inter-governmental character of the ICAPP. Until 2016, 11 governments have signed the contract (Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Iran, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Nepal, the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Vietnam). As we believe that these MOUs will augment the ICAPP's "intergovernmental" nature, we strongly recommend the ICAPP members persuade their respective governments to join the MOU.

Third, we know that some non-intergovernmental organizations were granted the observer status even after the adoption of the 1999 UNGA resolution since the UN agreed that cooperation with them would be beneficial to the UN. It means that observer status could be granted to the ICAPP also if the UN finds that the ICAPP activities are supportive enough to achieve the UN's objectives. In this regard, we need to make more efforts to expand our contacts with the UN through such activities as organizing forums or workshops supporting the UN Agenda 2030 or inviting as many UN representatives as possible at any ICAPP event as we have been doing through the first half of this year.

Fourth, we can plan to submit a draft UNGA resolution for the observer status in 2022 or 2023 considering the COVID-19 situation. By that time, we need to conduct a campaign to have more co-sponsors for the resolution and persuade some states against the ICAPP observer status to accept our logic. The Secretariat is ready to restart our concerted drive together with the SC members as soon as the COVID-19 situation is improved.

During the Meeting, the Members supported ICAPP's continuous efforts to get an observer status in the UN General Assembly. Hon. Youssef Awad, Coordinator for Asia and Overseas, Free Patriotic Movement Party of Lebanon, supported the "MOU on Cooperation to Support the Activities of the ICAPP" and other efforts of the ICAPP to gain observer status in the UNGA. Hon. Salman Khurshid suggested that the ICAPP should vigorously pursue the observer status in the UNGA. He said that the ICAPP should critically analyze the past cases where organizations were accepted as observers in the UNGA, and draw our own conclusions that would be persuasive in our effort to reach out in the future.

Appendixes

I. Documents for the Meeting

1. *Program*
2. *List of Participants*
3. *List of Speakers*
4. *Annotated Agenda*
5. *Rules of Procedure*

II. Updated List of SC Members

III. Documents for the 2nd Special Video Conference on COVID-19 Pandemic

1. *Program*
2. *List of Participants*
3. *Statement*

IV. ICAPP Work Program for the Remainder of 2021

V. Letter from the AK Parti

VI. Letter from the Hon. Jan Zahradil

VII. Letter from the Mongolian People's Party

VIII. Terms of References of the Asian Cultural Council

IX. Tentative Work Program of the ICAPP for 2022