(Draft) Istanbul Statement on the 5th Meeting of the ICAPP Media Forum

As of 11 November 2022

We, the journalists from *[ ],* gathered on 18 November 2022 on the sidelines of the 11th General Assembly of the International Conference of Asian Political Parties (ICAPP), which was held in Istanbul, the Republic of Türkiye, under the theme of "The Role of Political Parties in Strengthening Dialogue for Global Peace, Prosperity and Cooperation," and convened the 5th Meeting of the ICAPP Media Forum.

We welcomed the achievements the ICAPP had made since its inception in Manila in 2000 in bringing together leaders of competing governing, opposition and independent political parties of Asia. During the past two decades, the ICAPP has grown to represent more than 350 political parties in Asia and established partnerships with the organizations of political parties in Africa, Europe and the Americas such as the Permanent Conference of Political Parties in Latin America and the Caribbean (*COPPPAL*), the Council of African Political Parties (CAPP), and by establishing the Asia-Europe Political Forum (AEPF). We acknowledged that the ICAPP had become a positive political force to promote mutual understandings and friendships among countries and peoples of Asia and beyond.

We renewed our endorsement of the main function of the ICAPP Media Forum, as set out at the 1st meeting of the Forum, to expand communication and cooperation between the ICAPP and the media and to promote interactions between the ICAPP and the peoples in the region through diverse and wide media coverage of the ICAPP activities.

At the same time, we acknowledged that the media had been faced with multiple challenges to and deteriorating environment for its operations. As pointed out in the 2022 Global Report of UNESCO on "World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development," the media has recently been subject to new restrictions on press freedom, threats to the safety of journalists, and failing traditional business models, which in turn has seriously undermined public confidence in media.

We affirmed that journalism was a vital part of information as a public good, and therefore, needed public support. We also affirmed that all nations were to be strengthened by a freer flow of information and that pluralistic media was the cornerstone of democratic societies by way of fulfilling the societies' right to know, and the journalists' right to impart information. We emphasized that, in time of health and climate crises, and growing discourse of mistrust, the governments should not allow crises to be used as a pretext for restricting the public's access to information or for imposing tighter controls on media, but should instead strengthen freedom of expression, increase support for trustworthy news outlets and enhance media and information literacy capacities so that people would recognize and value as well as defend and demand journalism as a vital part of information as a public good.

In this regard, we expressed deep concern over the proliferation at an alarming scale of dis- and misinformation, which was at times created out of political, ideological, or commercial motives, to mislead the public or to incite discrimination, hate and even violence. Amidst the social media revolution, fake news is a real, living danger that threatens the free flow of information and undermines the sanctity of truth. In a 24/7 news cycle that is the hallmark of 21st Century media culture, the responsibility of journalists and media organization is paramount: sift fact from fiction, so that credibility of a free and independent press is never

undermined. We acknowledged that in order to counter dis- and misinformation, we would need to improve our capabilities to detect and respond while complying with international human rights laws and respecting the freedom of media. We stressed that there should be more coordinated and leveled up efforts on the part of governments, political parties, civil societies and media organizations, to promote accurate, inclusive and diverse media contents while ensuring the safety of journalists.

Against this backdrop, we fully supported the draft "Istanbul Declaration", which was to be adopted at the 11th General Assembly of the ICAPP on 19 November 2022. We also agreed that the world was experiencing a multitude of crises of geopolitical conflicts including the Russia-Ukrainian war, climate change, public health emergencies, energy and food shortages, and global inequality, and in this vein, hoped that the goals and commitments laid out in the Declaration would be realized and successfully implemented with the cooperation of all political parties.

We agreed that ICAPP Media Forum is a useful platform where political parties and media could cooperate to promote communication and strengthen cooperation to achieve the goal of building an Asian Community of peace, stability, harmony and prosperity. In this regard, we hoped that more effective institutional mechanisms be installed to encourage more journalists to participate in this forum and agreed to hold the 6th Meeting of the ICAPP Media Forum in the near future.

We expressed our deepest gratitude to the Justice and Development Party (*AK Parti*) of the Republic of Türkiye, for the excellent preparations for our meeting and warm hospitality during our stay. We also noted with great appreciation the administrative support of the ICAPP Secretariat in organizing the meeting.

Adopted unanimously on this 18th day of November 2022 in Istanbul, the Republic of Türkiye.

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