Draft Conclusions of the 40th Meeting of the Standing Committee of the International Conference of Asian Political Parties
(Kathmandu, Nepal, October 13, 2023)

The 40th 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") took place at the Mirgha Hall of Gokarna Forest Resort in Kathmandu, Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal from 20:00 to 22:00 on October 13, 2023, on the eve of the 5th Meeting of the Asia-Europe Political Forum (hereinafter referred to as "the AEPF"), which was held in Kathmandu, Nepal during October 13-16, 2023.

The list of participants and the annotated agenda of the Meeting are attached as ***Appendixes I and II.***

The Meeting was co-chaired by Hon. Chung Eui-yong, Chairperson of the ICAPP SC, and Hon. Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Co-Chairperson and Special Rapporteur of the ICAPP SC.

I. Issues Relating to the ICAPP Standing Committee (SC)

Statement of the ICAPP SC on the Earthquake in Afghanistan

As was informed by the ICAPP Update 23-58 of October 9, 2023, the SC Members issued a statement about the devastating earthquake in Afghanistan on October 9, 2023. The SC Members expressed deep sympathy and condolences to the people and government of Afghanistan regarding the tremendous losses and pain caused by the disaster, and urged the international community to demonstrate solidarity with, and provide assistance to, Afghanistan in their hour of dire need. The statement on the earthquake in Afghanistan is attached as ***Appendix III.***

New Members of the SC

The SC Members welcomed the following four new SC Members:

- Hon. Zafer Sırakaya, Member of Parliament for Istanbul and Deputy Chairman of the Justice and Development Party (*AK Parti*) in charge of Foreign Affairs, who was appointed as the representative of the *AK Parti* of Türkiye in the ICAPP SC, replacing Hon. Efkan Ala, as was informed by the ICAPP Update 23-34 of July 11, 2023.
- Hon. Dr. Prof. Hossein Niknam, Vice Minister of the Ministry of Health of Iran and Member of Central Committee of Islamic *Mo'talefeh* Party, who was appointed as the representative of the Islamic *Mo'talefeh* Party of Iran in the ICAPP SC, replacing the late Hon. Dr. Hassan Ghafourifard, as was informed by the ICAPP Update 23-37 of July 14, 2023.
- Hon. Narantuya Zagdkhuu, Director of the Policy and Strategy Institute of the Democratic Party, who was appointed as the representative of the Democratic Party of Mongolia in the ICAPP SC, replacing Hon. Erdenesuvd Derem, as was informed by the ICAPP Update 23-49 of August 29, 2023.

- Hon. Tahir Budagov, Deputy Chairperson and the Head of the Central Office of the *Yeni* (New) Azerbaijan Party (*YAP*), who was appointed as the representative of the *YAP* of Azerbaijan in the ICAPP SC, replacing Hon. Dr. Ali Ahmadov, as was informed by the ICAPP Update 23-51 of September 11, 2023.

The updated list of SC Members is attached as ***Appendix IV-1.***

Appointment of the New Secretary-General

As was informed by the ICAPP Update 23-41 of July 28, 2023, Hon. Kwon Hee-seog was appointed as the new Secretary-General of the ICAPP Secretariat with the consent of the SC Members as of August 1, 2023, replacing Hon. Ahn Myung-soo. In accordance with Para 1, Article 13 of the ICAPP Charter, the appointment of the new Secretary-General shall be subject to confirmation at the 12th General Assembly to be held in November 2024. Hon. Kwon Hee-seog will be in charge of the general management of the ICAPP Secretariat. Hon. Kwon Hee-seog, had served as ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Italy and ASEAN in Jakarta.

The SC Members welcomed the newly appointed Secretary-General of the ICAPP. Hon. Kwon Hee-seog stated that he was honored and privileged to be appointed as the Secretary General of the ICAPP Secretariat and would do his best to provide support and assistance to the ICAPP activities.

The curriculum vitae of Secretary-General Kwon is attached as ***Appendix IV-2.***

Preferment of ICAPP SC Members

The SC Members congratulated on the preferment of two ICAPP SC members as follows:

- Hon. Khuon Sudary, Vice Chairperson of the ICAPP SC representing the Cambodian People's Party, was elected as the President of Cambodia's National Assembly on August 22, 2023, as was informed by the ICAPP Update 23-53 of September 22, 2023.
- Hon. Dr. Nalinee Taveesin, Member of the ICAPP SC representing the P*heu Thai* Party of Thailand and Co-Chairperson of the ICAPP Business Council, was appointed as Advisor to the Prime Minister and Trade Representative of Thailand on September 14, 2023, as was informed by the ICAPP Update 23-53 of September 22, 2023.

Future Meetings of the ICAPP SC

An understanding had been reached among the SC Members to hold the 41st SC Meeting in Brussels back-to-back with the 6th Meeting of the Asia-Europe Political Forum which was proposed to be held in Brussels, Belgium in April 2024, as suggested by Hon. Jan Zahradil, Co-Chairperson of the Asia-Europe Political Forum (AEPF), Member of the European Parliament representing the Czech Republic and Bureau Member of the European Conservatives and Reformists Group (ECR) in the European Parliament, at the 39th SC Meeting in Busan on May 1, 2023.

In this regard, Hon. Jan Zahradil proposed to postpone the 6th Meeting of the AEPF to the latter part of 2024 in consideration of the European Parliamentary Elections, which is now scheduled for June 7-9, 2024.

The SC Members agreed to the suggestion and some SC Members tentatively offered to host the 41st SC Meeting during the first half of 2024, subject to the approval by the leadership of their parties. In this regard, the ICAPP Secretariat was tasked to continue consultation with the SC Members regarding the venue and dates of the next SC Meeting, and inform the SC Members the results of the consultation in due course.

It was reconfirmed to hold the 42nd SC Meeting on the sidelines of the 12th General Assembly (GA) to be held in Phonom Penh, Cambodia in November 2024, following the tradition of the ICAPP, as was agreed at the 38th SC Meeting held in Istanbul on November 17, 2022.

II. Review of the ICAPP Activities Since the 39th SC Meeting

Report of the ICAPP Delegation to Japan

It was reported that, as a part of the ICAPP's reach-out efforts, an ICAPP delegation was sent to Japan during April 10-11, 2023. The delegation was composed of Hon. Ha Tae-keung, Member of the ICAPP Standing Committee and Member of the National Assembly from the People Power Party; Hon. Lee Dong-ju, Member of the National Assembly from the *Minjoo* (Democratic) Party of the Republic of Korea; and Hon. Ahn Myung-soo, Secretary-General of the ICAPP Secretariat.

The ICAPP delegation had meetings with the following political leaders of Japan

- Hon. Masaharu Nakagawa, Member of the House of Representatives, and Chairperson of Constitutional Research Committee of Constitutional Democratic Party
- Hon. Yoichiro Aoyagi, Member of the House of Representatives and Executive Deputy Director of the International Department of the Constitutional Democratic Party
- Hon. Hideshi Futori, Member of the House of Representatives, Constitutional Democratic Party
- Hon. Shintaro Ito, Member of the House of Representatives, Director-General of the International Bureau of the Liberal Democratic Party
- Hon. Ryuji Koizumi, Member of the House of Representatives, Liberal Democratic Party

The report of the ICAPP delegation's visit to Japan is attached as ***Appendix V.***

Report of the ICAPP Delegation to Australia and New Zealand

It was also reported that, as a part of the ICAPP's reach-out efforts, an ICAPP delegation was sent to Australia and New Zealand during June 14-20, 2023. The ICAPP delegation was composed of Hon. Cho Jeong-sik and Hon. Ha Tae-kyung, both Members of the ICAPP SC

and Members of the National Assembly, Hon. Kang Hoon-sik, Co-Chairperson of the ICAPP Media Forum and Member of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea, and Hon. Ahn Myung-soo, Secretary General of the ICAPP Secretariat.

The ICAPP delegation had meetings with the following political leaders of Australia.

- Hon. Joanne Ryan, Member of Parliament and Chief Government Whip, Australian Labor Party
- Hon. Jennifer Light, National Assistant Secretary of Australian Labor Party
- Hon. Bert Van Manen, Member of Parliament and Chief Opposition Whip, Liberal Party
- Hon. Simon Birmingham, Leader of Opposition in the Senate, Liberal Party

The ICAPP delegation also met with the following political leaders of New Zealand.

- Hon. Greg O'Connor, Leader of Opposition in the Senate, Liberal Party
- Hon. Gerry Brownlee, MP of National Party

The discussions in Japan, Australia and New Zealand were conducted in a constructive, amicable, and forward-looking way, and focused on the current activities and the future plans of the ICAPP and how to enhance the cooperation and coordination between the ICAPP and the political parties in the three countries. The representatives of the political parties in the three countries agreed to continue to further explore possible and practical ways for collaboration with the ICAPP.

In this regard, the SC Members agreed to the need for more coordinated efforts to continue reaching out not only to the political parties in the three countries but also in other countries in the region which have not actively participated in the ICAPP activities and programs in recent years. In particular, SC Members agreed to the need for efforts to reestablish contacts with the leading political parties in India, in particular with the *Bharatiya Janata* Party (*BJP*) and the Indian National Congress Party (INC), and to send an ICAPP mission to India after its general elections to be held during April and May 2024. The more concrete plans for the ICAPP mission to India will be further discussed among the SC Members, and the results will be shared with the SC Members in due course.

The report of ICAPP delegation to Australia and New Zealand is attached as ***Appendix VI.***

Report of the ICAPP Electoral Observer Mission to Cambodia

An ICAPP Mission was dispatched to Cambodia during July 20-24, 2023, at the invitation of the National Election Committee (NEC) and the Civil Society Alliance Forum (CSAF) of Cambodia, to observe the general elections held on July 23, 2013. The ICAPP Mission was composed of representatives of thirteen political parties from ten countries in the region, i.e. Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Iran, Lebanon, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, and Vietnam, and led by Hon. Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Co-Chairperson and Special Rapporteur of the ICAPP SC. Hon Ahn Myung-soo, Secretary General of the ICAPP Secretariat and a Member of the ICAPP Business Council from Indonesia also joined the mission.

Upon arrival in Phnom Penh, the members of the ICAPP mission were given orientation by the NEC and the Ministry of Interior of the Cambodian government, and the CSAF on the procedures of the general elections and the code of conduct for electoral observers. While in Cambodia, the delegation paid a courtesy call to His Excellency Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, the Prime Minister of Cambodia. They also met with Hon. Annie Sok An, spouse of the late H.E Samdech Vibol Panha Sok An, former Deputy Prime Minister and Member of the ICAPP SC. Afterwards, they met other leaders of the ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP), including H.E. Prak Sokhonn, Deputy Prime Minister of Cambodia. The delegation also had meetings with HRH Prince Norodom Chakravuth, President and Chairperson of the Standing Committee of the *FUNCINPEC* Party, and leaders of the Grassroots Democratic Party (GDP).

On election day, the ICAPP mission visited four different polling stations, including the ones in *Santhormok* High School and *Baktuk* High School, and observed as the NEC staff were carrying out their task with the assistance of volunteers. The ICAPP mission was also invited to witness the vote counting process after the conclusion of voting. The mission issued the statement on the results of their observations on the elections on July 23, 2023.

The statement, report, and program of the ICAPP electoral observer mission to Cambodia are attached as ***Appendixes VII-1, VII-2, and VII-3***

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

The 6th Meeting of the ICAPP Youth Wing and the 7th Meeting of the ICAPP Women's Wing were hosted by the Mongolian People's Party (MPP) in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia during August 4-7, 2023. The two meetings were attended by representatives of 23 political parties from 15 countries.

The Youth Wing meeting focused on the main topics of "Engaging Young People in Social and Political Dialogue for Post-Pandemic Socio-Economic Progress," and the Women's Wing meeting on "Promoting Women's Leadership to Achieve a Gender-Responsive Post-Pandemic Recovery."

Hon. Uchral Nyam-Osor, Minister of Digital Development and Communications of Mongolia and President of Social Democratic Youth of the MPP, and Hon. Mrs. Nomin Chinbat, Minister of Culture of Mongolia and Vice President of Social Democratic Women of the MPP, were elected as Chairpersons of the Youth Wing and the Women's Wing respectively, and mandated to serve in their capacity until the next meetings of both affiliated bodies are held.

All SC Members expressed their deep gratitude to the Mongolian host for providing excellent opportunities and adopted the Ulaanbaatar Statements for both meetings. The Ulaanbaatar Statement for the Youth Wing called upon Members to promote equal opportunities for all, including youth, while the Ulaanbaatar Statement for the Women's Wing encouraged Members to pursue the political and socio-economic empowerment of women and to support their full and equal participation in decision-making at all levels.

The program, list of participants, and the two Ulaanbaatar Statements are attached as **Appendixes *VIII-1, VIII-2, VIII-3, and VIII-4.***

III. ICAPP Work Programs for 2023 and 2024

6th Meeting of the ICAPP Media Forum

The ICAPP Secretariat proposed to host the 6th Meeting of the ICAPP Media Forum in Seoul, Republic of Korea, during November 17-19, 2023.

SC Members and two journalists from each country were invited to the meeting, and the ICAPP Secretariat will provide local accommodations for SC Members and up to two (2) journalists from each country for up to three (3) nights. The Secretariat will also provide an economy-class round-trip air ticket for one journalist from each country due to budget constraints.

The topic for the Plenary Session will be "The Role of the Media in Building an Asian Community and Promoting Political Democratization."

At the request of SC Members, Hon. Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Co-Chairperson and Special Rapporteur of the ICAPP SC, had an informal meeting with several participants after the SC meeting, and submitted a proposal for the future action plan of the ICAPP Media Forum.

The invitation letter, tentative program, concept paper, and the proposal for future action plan of the ICAPP Media Forum are attached as ***Appendixes IX-1, IX-2, IX-3, and IX-4.***

6th Meeting of the Asia-Europe Political Forum

At the 39th SC Meeting in Busan on May 1, 2023, Hon. Jan Zahradil, Co-Chairperson of the Asia-Europe Political Forum (AEPF), Member of the European Parliament representing the Czech Republic and Bureau Member of the European Conservatives and Reformists Group (ECR) in the European Parliament, had proposed to host the 6th Meeting of the AEPF in Brussels, Belgium in April 2024. Hon. Jan Zahradil suggested, however, to postpone the meeting to the latter part of 2024, in consideration of the European Parliamentary Elections now scheduled for June 6-9, 2024.

In this regard, some SC Members also suggested that the invitation to the next AEPF meeting should be extended to other groups of political parties represented in the European Parliament and other major political parties in European countries, to promote broader participation of representatives from various European political parties with diverse political orientation in the future meetings of the AEPF. SC Members also agreed to consider sending an ICAPP mission to the European Parliament to meet with representatives of groups of political parties represented in the European Parliament and discuss ways to further expand exchanges and cooperation between political parties in Asia and Europe.

12th and 13th General Assemblies (GA) of the ICAPP

At the 38th SC Meeting in Istanbul on November 17, 2022, SC Members had welcomed with gratitude the offer by the representatives of the Cambodian People's Party to host the *12th* General Assembly (GA) in Phonom Penh, Cambodia in November 2024. It had also been agreed that the 42nd SC Meeting and the 3rd Meeting of the Asian Cultural Council (ACC) of the ICAPP would be held on the sidelines of the 12th GA.

At the 38th SC Meeting, the SC Members had also welcomed the offer made by the representatives of the *Minjoo* (Democratic) Party and People Power Party of the Republic of Korea to co-host the 13th GA in Seoul, Republic of Korea during the second half of 2026.

The exact dates of the future GAs will be notified in due course.

Proposal for ICAPP Special Conference or Workshop

Hon. Tahir Budagov, Member of the ICAPP SC and Deputy Chairman and Head of the Central Office of the *Yeni* (New) Azerbaijan Party, suggested an idea of hosting an ICAPP special conference in Baku, at an appropriate time during 2024.

Ms. Valeriya Gorokhova, Head of the Department for Foreign Affairs of the United Russia Party, also suggested an idea of hosting an ICAPP special conference in Russia after the 2024 Russian presidential election scheduled for March 2024, which will be subject to approval by the leadership of her party.

In this regard, some SC Members suggested to consider a topic on how to facilitate communication among leaders of political parties on their experiences and ideas in organizing political activities, and recruiting and training young political leaders, for future ICAPP special conference or workshop.

V. Other Issues

Streamlining of the Terms of Reference of the ICAPP Affiliated Groups

At the meetings of the ICAPP affiliated groups held in 2023, i.e. the 1st Meeting of the ICAPP Business Council held in Busan, Republic of Korea on May 1, and the 6th Meeting of the ICAPP Youth Wing and the 7th Meeting of the ICAPP Women's Wing held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia on August 4, the Terms of Reference (TORs) of each group were revised reflecting the current working environment. The TOR for of the Asia Europe Political Forum (AEPF) was also revised at the 5th Meeting of the AEPF held in Kathmandu, Nepal on October 14, 2023.

The revised TORs of the ICAPP Business Council, Youth Wing, Women's Wing and the AEPF are attached as ***Appendixes X-1, X-2, X-3 and X-4.***

In this regard, the SC Members are invited to review the TORs of other affiliated groups of the ICAPP, i.e. Tourism Promotion and Inter-City Cooperation Council (TOPIC), Asian Cultural Council (ACC), ICAPP Program for Disasters Assistance (IPDA), ICAPP Media Forum and Asia-Europe Political Forum (AEPF). It was agreed that these TORs would be taken up for reviews when the relevant Meetings would be held.

Extension of the Cooperation Agreement between the ICAPP and the UNESCO

On December 4, 2018, the ICAPP concluded the Cooperation Agreement with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to "update, consolidate and strengthen their cooperation in a program-oriented manner for the purpose of achieving their common aims within the context of the U.N. Charter, the Constitution of the UNESCO

and the Charter of the ICAPP and Terms of Reference of its affiliated bodies, including the Asian Cultural Council (ACC), values and objectives." The agreement was signed in Siem Reap, Cambodia by Secretary General of the ICAPP Secretariat, Director General of the UNESCO and Chairperson of the ACC.

In accordance with Article 6 of the ICAPP-UNESCO Cooperation Agreement, the agreement will "remain effective for a period of five years from the date of signature," and "may be extended by the mutual written agreement of both Parties, in accordance with their respective rules, regulations, and procedures." As the end of the duration of the agreement approached, and as mandated by the SC Members after the circulation of ICAPP Update 23-52, dated September 15, 2023, regarding the extension of the agreement, the Secretary General of the ICAPP Secretariat and the Chairperson of the ACC have sent an official letter to the Director-General of the UNESCO on October 5, 2023, proposing to take necessary measures to extend the Cooperation Agreement between ICAPP and UNESCO for a period of five years in accordance with Article 6 of the Agreement.

The Letter to the Director-General of the UNESCO is attached as ***Appendix XI.***

In this regard, it was reported that the representatives of the Cambodian government were currently in contact with the UNESCO Secretariat in Paris, France to facilitate the process for the five-year extension of the agreement.

Cooperation with the COPPPAL and the CAPP

The meetings between the ICAPP and the *COPPPAL*, Conference of Political Parties in Latin America and the Caribbean, have been held at the SC level in Buenos Aires in 2009, Phnom Penh in 2010, Mexico City in 2012, Baku in 2013, and Mexico City in 2014. Following these meetings, the bilateral cooperation between the ICAPP and *COPPPAL* has developed and expanded into a trilateral meeting involving CAPP, Council of African Political Parties, since 2016. The Secretariats of ICAPP-*COPPPAL*-CAPP had collaborated to hold three trilateral meetings thus far at the SC level, in Jakarta (2016), in Tegucigalpa (2017), and in Moscow (2018).

Due to the ongoing political turmoil in Sudan, where the CAPP Secretariat is based, it has become increasingly challenging for the ICAPP, *COPPPAL*, and CAPP to maintain effective trilateral cooperation. As a result, the proper functioning of the CAPP Secretariat and its Members has been significantly hampered.

Under the circumstances, it is recommended that the ICAPP Secretariat continue its bilateral collaboration with the *COPPPAL* Secretariat to resume the regular ICAPP-*COPPPAL* bilateral meetings on the occasion of the meetings of the ICAPP SC or General Assembly, and also continue to reach out to political parties in Africa to explore ways to further promote cooperation among political parties in Asia and Africa with the assistance of political parties represented in the ICAPP Standing Committee.

Appendixes:

I. List of Participants in the 40th SC Meeting
II. Annotated Agenda for the 40th SC Meeting
III. Statement of the ICAPP SC on the Earthquake in Afghanistan
IV. Issues Relating to the ICAPP Standing Committee
1. *List of SC Members*
2. *The Curriculum Vitae of Secretary General Kwon*

V. Report of the ICAPP Delegation to Japan
VI. Report of the ICAPP Delegation to Australia and New Zealand
VII. Report of the ICAPP Electoral Observer Mission to Cambodia
1. *Statement*
2. *Report*
3. *Program*

VIII. 6th Meeting of the ICAPP Youth Wing and 7th Meeting of the ICAPP Women's Wing
1. *Program*
2. *List of Participants*
3. *Statement of the 6th Meeting of the ICAPP Youth Wing*
4. *Statement of the 7th Meeting of the ICAPP Women's Wing*

IX. 6th Meeting of the ICAPP Media Forum
1. *Invitation Letter*
2. *Tentative Program*
3. *Concept Paper*
4. *Future Action Plan*

X. Revised TORs of the Affiliated Groups
1. *TOR of the ICAPP Business Council*
2. *TOR of the ICAPP Youth Wing*
3. *TOR of the ICAPP Women's Wing*
4. *TOR of Asia Europe Political Forum*

XI. ICAPP Letter to the Director-General of the UNESCO