

Safeguarding Universal Values in Indo-Pacific: Role of G7/Japan

Annual Conference of Asia
Democracy Network
(Indonesia, Nov 2022)

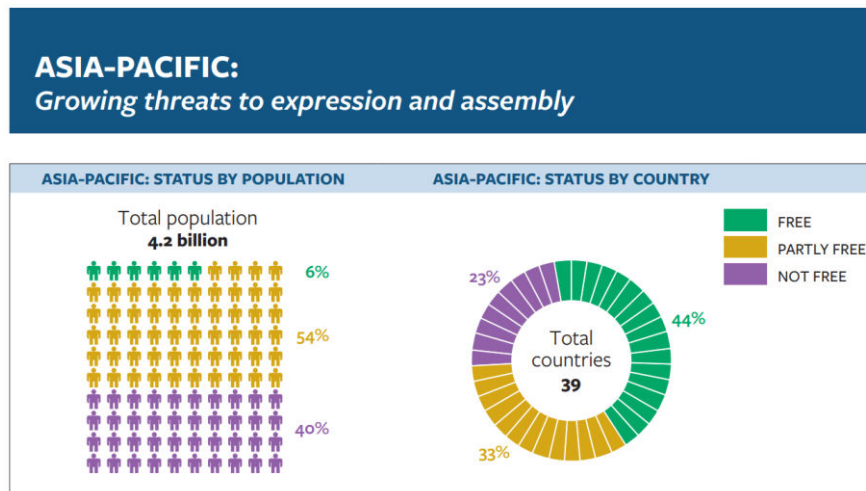


Sunnylands Retreat II
(Odawara, Aug 2022)



- **Narrowing space for CSOs and media**
Only 6% of populations in Asia enjoying freedom of expression and assembly (FH 2022)
- **From the rule of law to the rule by law**
Authoritarian rulers are learning from one another
Abuse law and legal system
=>Strengthen **solidarity, mutual support, funding**

- Safeguarding freedom, democracy and the rule of law is crucial for our national security, peace and prosperity.
- Democratic partnership must be stepped up at the government and civil society levels.
 1. Urge governments to raise the priority of their support for universal values in **development cooperation and national security strategy**.
 2. Propose to strengthen **support for CSOs and the media**, including the possibility of establishing a new funding mechanism.
 3. Address **the urgent needs of displaced activists**



Odawara Recommendations:

1. Positioning of the Protection of Universal Values National Security Strategy (2022)



Japan's National interest:

- ① Maintain Japan's peace and security and ensure its survival.
- ② Achieve the prosperity of Japan and its people, thereby consolidating its peace and security.
- ③ **Maintain and protect universal values, such as freedom, democracy, respect for fundamental human rights and the rule of law**, and international order based on international law.

Maintain and develop **a free and open international order, especially in the Indo-Pacific region.**

Fundamental principles:

Strive to maintain and uphold universal values and principles in cooperation with other countries, and lead the international community by example.

Strategic approaches:

Further promote efforts to realize a FOIP by deepening cooperation with like-minded countries.

Strategically utilize ODA to maintain and develop a free and open international order.

Actively accept people displaced due to war or natural disasters in foreign countries.

Raise its voice against serious human rights violations and build on dialogue and cooperation for the protection and promotion of human rights.

2. Establishing “the Indo-Pacific Platform for Universal Values” to support CSOs and the media



Issue: The Japanese government and JICA’s democratization support of legal systems, improvement of administrative capacity, electoral systems, etc.

- In many cases it is difficult to provide assistance to civil society or the media because aid must be given in response to requests from a recipient country’s government;
- There are limits to what can be achieved in democratization support when based solely on request-based intergovernmental support. A funding mechanism to complement government-to-government cooperation is necessary.
- In G7 countries other than Japan and in Australia, there are non-governmental organizations that receive government funding to support civil society organizations in other countries.
- Prime Minister Kishida at the Diet: “As Japan assumes the G7 presidency in 2023, it plans to take the lead in strengthening international norms based on universal values, such as the rule of law”. The creation of a financial mechanism would be a concrete way to achieve the Prime Minister’s policy.

Proposed New Mechanism:

- **The Indo-Pacific Platform for Universal Values, consisting of civil society organizations in Japan**
- Activities: ① Promotion of dialogue and exchange to deepen mutual understanding between CSOs in Japan and partners
② provide support to CSOs and media that advocate for universal democratic values in the Indo-Pacific region
- **Source of funding: Request funding from the government,** and also from private sector donation

3. References to universal values at the expanded G7 Hiroshima Summit?



2021: UK Presidency

- G7 and Australia, India, Republic of Korea, and South Africa

Open Societies Statement

The parties reaffirm and encourage others to embrace the values that bind us together, including our respect for international rules/norms relating to:

- Human rights for all
- Democracy, including each citizen's right to vote in free and fair elections
- Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls
- Freedom of expression
- The rule of law and independent judicial systems
- The importance of civic space and pluralistic civil societies

2022: German Presidency

- G7 and Argentina, India, Indonesia, Senegal, and South Africa

Resilient Democracies Statement

- As democracies, we seek to promote a rules-based international order
- We remain steadfast in our commitment to defending peace, human rights, the rule of law, human security and gender equality
- We will promote democratic principles and values
- We will protect the freedom of expression and opinion and ensure a free and independent media landscape
- We will create and protect free and vibrant civic spaces
- We commit to guarding the freedom, independence and diversity of civil society actors