

#ASEMHRS24

24th Informal Seminar on Human Rights: THE FUTURE OF HUMAN RIGHTS – FROM LOCAL TO GLOBAL

12-14 October 2026 | Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

The human rights landscape across Asia and Europe is undergoing rapid and profound transformation, driven by accelerating technological change, shifting geopolitical dynamics, deepening climate and environmental crises and evolving forms of governance. While the universality of international human rights norms continues to provide the normative foundation of the global order, their enforcement and implementation is increasingly conditioned by ever-more complex and intersecting local, regional, and global forces. Across both regions, these pressures intersect and compound one another, generating new vulnerabilities that existing mechanisms were not always designed to address.

At the same time, we are also witnessing emergence of new opportunities and broadening of the human rights movement corpus, with the involvement of actors ranging from local collective groups, social movements, local and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs), online activists and journalists.¹ Regional cooperation mechanisms are fostering dialogue, mutual learning, and shared standard-setting across national boundaries², while technological innovation and evolving forms of international cooperation hold genuine potential to strengthen participation, accountability, and protection. Furthermore, we have seen meaningful normative advances in human rights protection, with, for example, the recognition of the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment in 2022, the appointment of the UN Special Envoy for Future Generations in 2023, and the adoption of the first binding international AI treaty, the Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law in 2024. These developments demonstrate the human rights system's continuing capacity for adaptation and renewal.

Against this backdrop, there is a growing need for sustained, forward-looking reflection on how human rights frameworks, institutions, and practices can adapt to current and future realities. This means critically examining whether existing norms and mechanisms are sufficient to address today's human rights challenges and emerging risks and how responsibilities should be allocated among states, private actors, civil society, and other stakeholders. and how frameworks can be made more attentive to local contexts and more responsive to the communities they serve. Equally important is the question of how to strengthen existing systems and accelerate the implementation of human rights commitments already made, ensuring that agreed standards translate into tangible change on the ground

The 24th Informal ASEM Human Rights Seminar will bring together diverse stakeholders from across Asia and Europe to examine how human rights frameworks can adapt to contemporary challenges while identifying opportunities for stronger cooperation and developing actionable recommendations at domestic, regional, and global levels. Hosted in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia - a symbolically fitting venue given its position between the two regions - the Seminar continues nearly three decades of open, inclusive dialogue under the ASEM Human Rights Seminar series.

ABOUT THE SEMINAR

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Increased awareness and shared understanding of challenges and opportunities shaping the future of human rights protection across local, regional, and global levels.
- Identification of gaps, priorities, and forward-looking recommendations for action across government, NHRIs, civil society, academia, and international organisations.
- Strengthened collaboration and networks among ASEM partners to support ongoing cooperation, knowledge-sharing, and joint action across Asia and Europe.

TARGET AUDIENCE

- Government representatives
- National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) and ombudsmen offices
- Civil society organisations and human rights practitioners
- Academics, researchers, and legal experts
- International organisations and regional human rights mechanisms

ABOUT THE ORGANISERS

The Informal Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Seminar on Human Rights series was launched in 1997 to strengthen relations between civil society actors and governments in Asia and Europe on human rights issues.

The Seminar series is organised by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), which has acted as Secretariat since 2000, with the support from the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs, the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark.

Supervision of the Seminar is entrusted to a Steering Committee, composed of ASEF and its supporting partners, as well as representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, the European Union and the Raoul Wallenberg Institute.

The 24th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights (ASEMHRS24) is hosted by the National Human Rights Commission of Mongolia, in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia.

WORKING GROUPS AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The Seminar will be structured around three interconnected dimensions - the local, regional, and global - reflecting the conviction that effective human rights protection in the twenty-first century requires coherent and mutually reinforcing engagement at all levels of governance and society. On the 2nd day of the Seminar, participants will convene in three simultaneous working groups addressing human rights protection at the global, regional, and local levels respectively, with findings presented in plenary on the 3rd day to inform the Seminar's overall conclusions and recommendations.

Working Group 1 - Human Rights Protection at the Global Level

This working group will examine the state of the global human rights system, the nature and causes of the challenges it faces, and what a realistic and achievable agenda for its strengthening, renewal and reform might look like, including how to close persistent gaps in justice and accountability, and ensure that human rights commitments translate into effective protection and remedy in practice.

Context

The retreat from multilateralism, the weakening of international institutions, and the increasingly selective engagement of states with their treaty obligations³ have placed the normative and institutional foundations of human rights protection under unprecedented stress.

The United Nations human rights system, including the Human Rights Council, treaty bodies, and the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council, has made extraordinary contributions to the development of universal norms. The Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) created the first mechanism to examine the human rights record of every UN member state without exception and irrespective of their status of ratification with regard to the human rights instruments, transforming accountability from a selective process into a universal one. Treaty bodies such as the Committee Against Torture (CAT) has hardened critical norms through more definite interpretation, clarifying for instance that the prohibition on torture is absolute and permits no exceptions even in counterterrorism contexts.⁴ Meanwhile, Special Procedures such as the Special Rapporteur on human rights and extreme poverty have pushed the normative boundaries, reframing poverty as a condition states have binding obligations to address rather than merely a development challenge.⁵

Yet, a significant gap persists between normative achievement and practical application, including in the area of justice and accountability, where strengthening follow-up mechanisms and access to remedy remains an important priority. Despite being designed to hold governments accountable, the 47-member Human Rights Council's dynamics and voting structure have at times allowed states with poor human rights records to shield themselves from scrutiny.⁶ Treaty bodies are chronically underfunded⁷, affecting their ability to monitor and review state reports and victims complains.⁸

While the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) generates large volumes of recommendations with all 193 UN Member States participating in the human rights review process, their implementation remains uneven and challenging. At the same time, Independent Special Procedure mandate holders, who are often referred to as the “eyes and ears” of the human rights system due to their ability to bring new issues to the table, operate with limited resources⁹ and face growing obstruction, intimidation, threats as well as personal attacks for carrying out their mandates.¹⁰

Most fundamentally, the global human rights order is operating in a geopolitical environment defined by great power competition, fragmentation of global governance and a growing willingness of powerful states to treat international law as optional.¹¹ The erosion of the compliance culture that once gave mechanisms their practical force is the most serious structural challenge facing human rights protection today. Restoring confidence in the system and demonstrating its continued relevance has become an urgent priority, yet the political will required is in short supply and the resources available are shrinking.

“At the very moment when global crises are multiplying and the demand for human rights support is surging, the resources required to uphold these commitments are shrinking at an alarming rate. UN Human Rights is now operating at an existential minimum, forced to scale back essential work that cannot be paused without real human consequences.”

– UN Human Rights Appeal 2026¹²

Working Group Discussion Questions

1. International human rights standards are widely agreed on yet turning them into real protections for people on the ground remains a persistent challenge. What are the main obstacles, whether institutional, political, or financial, that prevent these commitments from being fully realised in

practice, and how do these challenges play out in different ways across Asian and European contexts?

2. Shifting geopolitical dynamics are placing the compliance culture that once gave human rights mechanisms their practical force under growing strain. What can states, international institutions, and other actors do to strengthen adherence to international human rights obligations in this more challenging environment?
3. Questions have been raised about the selectivity and representativeness of the international human rights system. How can the system be strengthened and made more inclusive and credible across diverse regional contexts, while preserving the universality and indivisibility of human rights norms?
4. The Human Rights Council, treaty bodies, the UPR, and Special Procedures each play distinct but interconnected roles, yet they often operate in silos, with limited coordination and mutual reinforcement. How can these mechanisms be better aligned and made to work more coherently together, and how can the UN80 process¹³ be used to build the political momentum, secure the resources, and drive the institutional reforms needed to make this happen?
5. As the global human rights system faces growing strain, what role can regional mechanisms, NHRIs, and civil society play in reinforcing and complementing its work, and what are the limits of such efforts in the absence of a well-functioning global framework?
6. When human rights violations go unaddressed at the global level, the credibility of the entire system is weakened. How can states move beyond selective engagement and build a more consistent and principled culture of collective accountability, and what would this require in terms of institutional design, diplomatic practice, and political commitment? What forms of Asia-Europe cooperation - in UN processes, capacity-building, and standard-setting - could most effectively contribute to strengthening the global human rights system at this critical moment?
7. Looking ahead to a stronger and more effective international human rights system, what does a realistic and achievable agenda for consolidating its gains and expanding its impact look like? What are the two or three most important steps that could be taken in the next five years to build on existing foundations, and who is best placed to lead them?

Working Group 2: Human Rights Protection at the Regional Level

Regional human rights arrangements represent a critical intermediate layer between the global normative framework and the national and local contexts in which rights are ultimately realised or denied. Across Asia and Europe, these arrangements reflect markedly different institutional structures, mandates, and levels of development. A shared challenge across both regions, however, is ensuring that regional mechanisms contribute meaningfully to justice and accountability -supporting follow-up on violations, strengthening access to remedy, and bridging the gap between regional standards and their implementation at the national level. This working group will explore the lessons that the European and Asian regional experiences offer one another, the gaps that remain in the Asian and European regional human rights architecture, and the opportunities for strengthened inter-regional cooperation and mutual learning within and beyond the ASEM framework.

Asia

At the regional level, the contrast between the European and Asian human rights landscapes is considerable. Across Asian countries within ASEM, the human rights landscape is characterised by considerable diversity in legal traditions, governance systems, and levels of institutional development. Unlike other world regions in which more developed systems for human rights protection are present (Africa, the Americas and Europe), the Asia-Pacific still lacks regional human rights institutions which complement the tasks performed at the UN level. This is mostly due to the large size and heterogeneity of the region, which includes a whole range of countries from big countries to small Pacific Island states, encompassing a variety of governmental regimes.¹⁴

Thus, the regional human rights architecture in Asia, while evolving, remains primarily dialogue-based and lacks the binding enforcement mechanisms. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)'s regional human rights structure, anchored by **ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR)**¹⁵ and the **ASEAN Human Rights Declaration of 2012**¹⁶, represents the most significant institutional development in the region, but remains promotional rather than enforcement-oriented, operating by consensus and without independent monitoring powers. These institutional challenges are further reflected in pressures on democratic governance and civic space in parts of the region, which underline the importance of strengthening the domestic foundations on which effective human rights protection depends. Large parts of Asia - including South Asia, Northeast Asia, and Central Asia - fall outside the reach of any dedicated regional human rights mechanism entirely, while sub-regional frameworks such as the **South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)**¹⁷ and **ASEAN+3**¹⁸ have not developed meaningful human rights mandates.

Cooperation among National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) through the **Asia Pacific Forum**¹⁹ alongside civil society networks and informal dialogue processes, provides some regional connective tissue, but cannot substitute for the institutional architecture that is currently absent.

Europe

In Europe, by contrast, the regional human rights system is the most institutionally advanced globally. Built around the **European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)** and the binding oversight of the **European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR)**, it offers individuals direct access to international justice and has generated a rich body of jurisprudence that has profoundly shaped national legal systems across the continent.²⁰ The **EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights** and the work of the **EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)** and the **European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI)** further strengthen this architecture by providing monitoring, research, and capacity-building functions that translate broad human rights commitments into concrete guidance for member states and national institutions alike.

Furthermore, The **Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)**, through its **Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)**, addresses human rights in the broader context of democracy and rule of law, covering a wider geographic area that extends into Central Asia.

However, Europe's system is not without its own pressures: shrinking civic space, the weakening of the rule of law, non-compliance by some states with ECtHR rulings²¹, democratic backsliding²², and growing tensions between migration management priorities and human rights commitments across Europe are increasingly affecting the region and undermining Europe's standing as a global human rights champion.

Together, these two regional landscapes offer a rich and contrasting set of lessons - on institutional design, the limits of consensus-based approaches, the value of binding enforcement, and the challenge of maintaining political commitment to human rights in the face of competing pressures.

Working Group Discussion Questions

1. Regional human rights arrangements across Asia and Europe reflect markedly different institutional structures and levels of development. What are the principal factors explaining these differences, and what can each region learn from the other's experience?
2. ASEAN's regional human rights framework is built on the principles of consensus, dialogue, and non-interference. How has this approach shaped the development of human rights cooperation in Southeast Asia? What good practices have emerged from this model, and how might they inform the framework's evolution to address emerging challenges more effectively?
3. Europe's regional system faces significant pressures, including democratic backsliding, non-implementation of Court judgments, and growing political tensions around supranational oversight. What good practices and hard-won lessons could inform and inspire more effective regional human rights cooperation in Asia and beyond?
4. Large parts of Asia currently lack access to a dedicated regional human rights mechanism. What concrete steps could states, NHRI networks, civil society, and sub-regional frameworks take to advance regional human rights cooperation in Asia, and which of these actions are most realistic and likely to gain traction in the near term?
5. Existing regional human rights frameworks were largely designed before the digital revolution, the climate crisis, and the rise of artificial intelligence. How are regional mechanisms in Asia and Europe adapting to these emerging challenges, and where can the two regions work together to develop common standards and responses?
6. How effectively do existing regional human rights mechanisms reach and serve the rights-holders they are designed to protect, including marginalised and vulnerable groups - and what practical reforms would make them more accessible and responsive?
7. What are the two or three most important and realistic steps that could be taken in the decade ahead to strengthen regional human rights cooperation across Asia and Europe, and what role can informal dialogue platforms such as the Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights play?

Working Group 3 - Human Protection at the Domestic Level

“Where after all do human rights begin? In small places, close to home.”
– Eleanor Roosevelt, Chair of the UN Human Rights Commission

As the primary duty-bearers under international human rights law, states bear the core obligations to respect, protect, and fulfil human rights. This means refraining from actions that violate rights, preventing third parties from doing so, and taking active steps - through legislation, policy, and resource allocation - to ensure that rights are realised in practice for all people within their jurisdiction.²³ It is at the national and local level, therefore, that the promise of international human rights law is either kept or broken.

The Domestic Architecture for Human Rights Protection

Across Asia and Europe, the domestic architecture of human rights protection has developed considerably in recent decades. The legislative, administrative and judicial authorities at all levels form the backbone framework, while national human rights institutions, as state-mandated yet independent of government bodies, and civil societies, as non-governmental actors, also play vital roles. Of the 51 ASEM member states, 40 have established national human rights bodies, of which 37 hold accredited membership of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI)²⁴ – a marker of compliance with the Paris Principles on NHRI independence. National Human Rights Action Plans, first recommended in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action of 1993, have since been developed in more than 80 countries worldwide, with Europe and Asia-Pacific together accounting for over half of all plans the development of National Human Rights Action Plans²⁵ Constitutional enshrinement of human rights, the growth of independent NHRIs, and the proliferation of national action plans reflect a growing recognition that international commitments must be rooted in robust national systems to have meaningful effect.

NHRIs can play a key role in the promotion and protection of human rights due to the unique position they occupy domestically, working between government, civil society, and NGOs to promote and monitor governments' efforts to implement international human rights law.²⁶ Their contributions have been significant, and many national human rights institutions have been critical in bringing human rights concerns to the fore, such as the Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines which conducted a national inquiry into "*Carbon Majors*" (large fossil fuel companies) regarding their impact on human rights in 2015²⁷ or National Human Rights Institutions in Germany, France, and Denmark that have been actively involved in the legislative process for corporate sustainability due diligence (CSDDD).²⁸ Yet, NHRI independence remains uneven and states have not always granted full independence to their NHRIs in accordance with Paris Principles, creating great variation across NHRIs around the world. Furthermore, in a number of countries across the region, democratic backsliding and the erosion of judicial independence are placing the domestic foundations of human rights protection under serious strain. In Europe, a number of national human rights institutions have reported a rise in intimidation and attacks against them.²⁹

Beyond state governments and NHRIs, a wider ecosystem of local actors, including municipal authorities, civil society organisations, legal aid providers, trade unions and community-based groups, plays a critical role in translating international commitments into everyday protection.

The growing human rights cities movement, in which municipal governments formally commit to implementing international human rights standards at the local level, represents a promising innovation in subnational human rights governance, with examples across both Asia and Europe.³⁰ Yet this ecosystem is under pressure: civil society space is narrowing across both regions, with restrictive NGO laws, surveillance, harassment, and funding constraints silencing many of the actors best placed to monitor violations and advocate for change.

At the same time, there are genuine grounds for encouragement. Across Asia, a growing number of NHRIs have achieved or maintained GANHRI A-status accreditation³¹; countries are increasingly adopting international human rights standards³² and developing national action plans around various human rights challenges,³³ serving as a telling example of how countries are taking greater ownership of the evolving human rights agenda. These developments demonstrate that progress at the national level is possible, and that it matters.

Working Group Discussion Questions

1. Where implementation of human rights obligations has improved meaningfully at the domestic level, what specific measures, institutions, or processes made the difference? How can these lessons be applied to close the gap between international commitments and reality in contexts across Asia and Europe where progress has stalled?
2. Tools for domestic accountability already exist in many countries, and constitutional guarantees, NHRIs, and national action plans have expanded significantly across the ASEM membership. How can these instruments move beyond formal commitments to deliver concrete results: accessible complaints mechanisms, independent investigations, and follow-through on recommendations?
3. As more NHRIs across the ASEM context achieve and sustain A-status, what specific conditions and support mechanisms have proven essential to maintaining that independence and effectiveness? How can these good practices be used to strengthen institutions still operating under political pressure or resource constraints?
4. As civic space continues to narrow across both Asia and Europe, what concrete measures - drawn from good practices in both regions - have proven most effective in protecting and expanding space for civil society and community-based groups to operate freely? What specific responsibilities fall to states, international institutions, and regional mechanisms in sustaining these efforts?
5. The human rights cities movement demonstrates that meaningful implementation can happen below the national level. How can the role of municipal authorities and local actors in human rights governance be better recognised, resourced, and connected to national and international frameworks? And how can local human rights actors be better equipped to address everyday violations, including discrimination, access to justice, and the right to adequate housing, that most directly affect the communities they serve? What examples of good practices exist, and what can they teach us about scaling and sustaining local human rights action?
6. Corporate accountability, mandatory human rights due diligence, and access to remedy are among the most dynamic areas of human rights implementation today. How can local human rights actors, including municipal authorities, ombudspersons, and community organisations, engage more effectively in these processes, and what would genuinely accessible remedy look like for the communities most affected?
7. Climate vulnerability, digital surveillance, shrinking civic space, and economic inequality intersect and compound one another in ways that siloed approaches cannot adequately address. How can national human rights frameworks and institutions better respond to this complex and shifting reality, and what concrete steps can be taken now to build more joined-up, effective responses?

8. The future of human rights will be determined in national courtrooms, institutions, and communities. What are the two or three most important investments that would most strengthen national human rights systems in the decade ahead?

CROSS-CUTTING QUESTIONS AND THE WAY FORWARD

The international human rights system faces a moment of reckoning. The mechanisms built over the past seven decades have achieved much - establishing universal norms, empowering individuals, and forging a common language of dignity and accountability. But they were designed for a world that is changing in ways that challenge their foundational assumptions and strain their political conditions. The distance between universal standards and lived reality remains in many places across Asia and Europe unacceptably wide. This makes it all the more important to strengthen and fully implement existing frameworks and ensuring that the commitments already made are honoured, and that the institutions designed to uphold them are adequately resourced and empowered to act. Thus, simply defending the status quo is no longer sufficient; what is needed is a more imaginative, inclusive, and adaptive approach to making human rights genuinely relevant to the lives of all people.

The 24th Informal ASEM Human Rights Seminar in Ulaanbaatar is an opportunity for genuine reflection and exchange on both the achievements and the limits of the existing system, and to bring the distinctive perspective of Asia-Europe dialogue to bear on the thinking and political momentum needed to build a human rights system capable of meeting the challenges ahead. It reflects a shared conviction that this system, however imperfect, remains indispensable, and that defending its core values, strengthening its foundations and renewing its relevance are among the most important tasks of our time.

Cross-cutting questions:

1. How can the **connections between global, regional, and local human rights mechanisms** be made to work better in practice? What concrete improvements, such as better follow-through on treaty body recommendations at the national level, stronger links between ombudspersons and UN mechanisms, or direct engagement of local authorities in UPR processes, would have the greatest impact? How can the UN80 process³⁴, as it reflects on the future of the multilateral system, create new momentum for a more coherent and connected approach to human rights implementation?
2. The human rights system built over the past seven decades remains a remarkable achievement and a vital foundation. How can its **core values and institutions be defended, strengthened, and better implemented** to meet today's challenges, and where are targeted reforms most needed to ensure the system remains relevant and effective for the twenty-first century?
3. The universality of human rights is the foundational principle of the international system, yet its realisation is always shaped by local context and cultural values. How can human rights frameworks be **made more attentive to local realities and more legitimate in diverse cultural contexts** - without compromising the universality and indivisibility of rights? What good practices exist, from across Asia and Europe, in bridging this tension and embedding universal standards in ways that resonate locally?
4. Civil society, independent institutions, and free media - the actors most essential to human rights protection - are under growing pressure across Asia and Europe. What measures, at the national, regional, and global levels, have proven most effective in reversing these trends and protecting the **civic space** on which the entire human rights system depends?
5. What is the distinctive contribution that informal, **cross-regional dialogue platforms** such as the Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights can make to the future of human rights, and how can their outcomes be translated into **concrete action** beyond the Seminar room?

ENDNOTES

- 1 Kirtika Kattel, "Are Human Rights Enough? Exploring Ways to Reimagine Human Rights Law" in Gentian Zyberi et al. (eds), *Reflections on the Future of Human Rights* (Routledge, 2024), 24.
- 2 E.g. regional peer-learning initiatives among NHRIs, including through the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (APF) and the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI). Furthermore, the EU-ASEAN Policy Dialogue on human rights a biennial high-level forum initiated in 2015 to discuss shared concerns, foster cooperation, and exchange best practices between the two regional bodies
- 3 [It is time to stand up for international law and demand accountability, Türk says | OHCHR](#) (accessed on 18 April 2026)
- 4 [CAT/C/GC/2: General comment No. 2 \(2007\) on the implementation of article 2 by States parties | OHCHR](#)
- 5 See e.g. remarks by Professor Olivier DE SCHUTTER, UN Special Rapporteur on human rights and extreme poverty the 22nd Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights – Expert Workshop on “A Rights-Based Approach to Poverty Reduction: Experiences and Lessons from Asia and Europe” on 24 September 2024: [Expert-Workshop-Report-on-a-Rights-Based-Approach-to-Poverty-Reduction.pdf](#) (p. 12)
- 6 [System under strain: progress and setbacks at UN Human Rights Council - CIVICUS LENS](#) (accessed on 11 April 2026)
- 7 The chronic underfunding affects the entire UN Human Rights system. “*In a context in which the Human Rights pillar of the UN is already underfunded, receiving less than one percent of the funding of the entire UN, the consequences for the UN Human Rights mandate, global human rights protection, and the wider human rights ecosystem, are immediate, severe, and system-wide*”. Appeal 2026, United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, p. 10. Available at: [united-nations-human-rights-appeal-2026.pdf](#) (accessed on 18 April 2026)
- 8 See e.g. [UN Financial Crisis Threatens to Halt Human Rights Work | Human Rights Watch](#)
- 9 *United Nations Human Rights Appeal 2026* (available [here](#))
- 10 [Attacks against UN human rights experts must cease: Coordination Committee of Special Procedures | OHCHR](#)
- 11 [It is time to stand up for international law and demand accountability, Türk says | OHCHR](#) (accessed on 18 April 2026)
- 12 *United Nations Human Rights Appeal 2026*, p. 10 (accessed 18 April 2026). Available here: [united-nations-human-rights-appeal-2026.pdf](#)
- 13 UN80 Initiative, <https://www.un.org/un80-initiative/en>.
- 14 Brian Burdekin, *National human rights institutions in the Asia-Pacific region*, Raoul Wallenberg Institute Human Rights Library, vol. 27 (Leiden and Boston: Nijhoff, 2006).
- 15 A consultative body established in 2009 with the task to “promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms of the peoples of ASEAN”. AICHR operates by consensus and in line with the ASEAN fundamental principles, including sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in domestic affairs. See “[Support to ASEAN/AICHR | OHCHR - Regional Office for South-East Asia Bangkok](#)”
- 16 *ASEAN Human Rights Declaration* ([ASEAN Human Rights Declaration - ASEAN Main Portal](#))
- 17 Comprising Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.
- 18 Bringing together the eleven ASEAN member states with China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea
- 19 A regional network of 27 diverse NHRIs
- 20 Keller, Helen, and Alec Stone Sweet (eds), 'Assessing the Impact of the ECHR on National Legal Systems', in Helen Keller, and Alec Stone Sweet (eds), *A Europe of Rights: The Impact of the ECHR on National Legal Systems* (Oxford, 2008; online edn, Oxford Academic, 1 Jan. 2009), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199535262.003.0011>, accessed 14 Apr. 2026.
- 21 Veronika Fikfak, “Changing State Behaviour: Damages before the European Court of Human Rights”, *European Journal of International Law*, Volume 29, Issue 4, November 2018, Pages 1091–1125, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ejil/chy064> (accessed on 26 April 2026)
- 22 See e.g. [FRA statement on recent developments affecting civil society and fundamental rights | European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights](#) and [NHRIs reveal key developments and challenges impacting rule of law across the European Union - ENNHRI](#) (accessed on 23 April 2026)
- 23 Gerald Staberock, “*Human Rights, Domestic Implementation*” (2011), available at [Oxford Public International Law: Human Rights, Domestic Implementation](#)
- 24 [Membership - GANHRI](#)
- 25 Of all NHRAPs, 28% have been developed in Europe and 25% in Asia-Pacific. See Azadeh Chalabi, Developments and Challenges of Designing National Human Rights Action Plans: 1994–2024, *Journal of Human Rights Practice*, Volume 17, Issue 2, July 2025, huaf002, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jhuman/huaf002>
- 26 Anne Smith, ‘The unique position of national human rights institutions: a mixed blessing?’, *Human Rights Quarterly* 28: 4, 2006, pp. 904–46.
- 27 [Philippines: Commission on Human Rights releases national inquiry on climate change & calls for carbon majors to be held accountable - Business and Human Rights Centre](#) (accessed on 23 April 2026)
- 28 [National Human Rights Institutions - Critical but, Overlooked Actors](#)
- 29 [NHRIs reveal key developments and challenges impacting rule of law across the European Union - ENNHRI](#) (accessed 13 April 2026)
- 30 [“Human Rights Cities:” Human rights solutions at local level | OHCHR](#)
- 31 [Membership - GANHRI](#)
- 32 Including in Southeast Asia. See Randy W. Nandyatama, "Human Rights in ASEAN" (22 November 2023), in Nalanda Roy (ed.), *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies* (New York, NY, online edn, Oxford Academic), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.013.787> (accessed 26 April 2026).
- 33 E.g. an increasing number of countries in Asia have developed – or are in the process of doing so – National Action Plan (NAP) on Business and Human Rights in line with UN guidelines. They include Thailand, Japan, Korea, China, Malaysia, Viet Nam, Indonesia, Pakistan and Mongolia. [From Commitment to Practice: Reviewing National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights in Southeast Asia | UNRHR 2025](#)
- 34 UN80 Initiative, <https://www.un.org/un80-initiative/en>.