



PRESS STATEMENT

SEANF COMMENCES FORMAL REVIEW OF MNHRC'S CONTINUED ELIGIBILITY FOR MEMBERSHIP

KUALA LUMPUR (25 SEPTEMBER 2026) - The Governing Board of the South East Asia National Human Rights Institutions Forum (SEANF), under the 2026 Chairpersonship of the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM), has commenced a formal review of the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission's (MNHRC) continued eligibility for SEANF membership. The Governing Board comprises the Chairpersons of SUHAKAM, the Indonesia National Commission of Human Rights (Komnas HAM), the Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines (CHRP), the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand (NHRCT), and the Provedor de Direitos Humanos e Justiça (PDHJ), Timor-Leste.

The review was initiated at a special meeting of the Governing Board convened on 14 August 2026 pursuant to Article 11(6) of the SEANF Rules of Procedure. The review assessed whether MNHRC continues to meet the standards of independence, effectiveness and institutional integrity established by the Paris Principles, which are incorporated into SEANF's definition of a national human rights institution.

In conducting the review, the Governing Board considered relevant information received by SEANF since 2021, MNHRC's progress in addressing the recommendations made by SEANF members in 2021, and relevant findings contained in the 2024 report of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions Sub-Committee on Accreditation. The review also considered the institutional implications of MNHRC's prospective assumption of the rotating SEANF Chairpersonship in 2027 while questions concerning its continued compliance with SEANF's membership standards remain unresolved.

On 1 September 2026, SEANF gave MNHRC at least 21 days' written notice, adopting **Rule 12.1(c) of the APF Constitution**¹ as an established procedural best practice for a proposed resolution affecting a member's standing. MNHRC may provide any information, explanation or submission it considers relevant before the Governing Board's consultation meeting with MNHRC on 1 October 2026.

After considering MNHRC's response and all other relevant material, the Governing Board will, on 1 October 2026, consider a resolution on whether MNHRC remains qualified for

¹ Rule 12.1(c) of the APF Constitution states, "If the Forum councillors intend to propose a resolution under rule 12.1(a), they must give the member written notice at least 21 days before the meeting at which the resolution is to be proposed."

continued membership in SEANF and eligible to assume the rotating SEANF Chairpersonship in 2027, or whether MNHRC should be disqualified from continued membership and declared ineligible to assume the Chairpersonship.

No determination has been made at this stage regarding MNHRC's continued eligibility for SEANF membership under **amended Article 1 of the SEANF Rules of Procedure**.² MNHRC has been given a reasonable opportunity to respond before the Governing Board considers any resolution, pursuant to **Article 24 of the SEANF Rules of Procedure**³ and the procedural best practice reflected in **Rule 12.1(c)(3) of the APF Constitution**.⁴

SEANF is conducting the formal review in good faith to safeguard the credibility, accountability, independence, and effectiveness of the Forum and its work to promote, protect, and fulfil human rights in Southeast Asia in accordance with the Paris Principles.

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² Amended Article 1 of the SEANF Rules of Procedure states, “NHRI refers to an independent national institution that complies with the Paris Principles and holds a constitutional and/or legislative mandate to promote and protect human rights.”

³ Article 24 of the SEANF Rules of Procedure states, “Any dispute between members concerning the interpretation or application of, or compliance with this Rules of Procedure shall be settled amicably by consultation or negotiation”.

⁴ Rule 12.1(c)(3) of the APF Constitution states, “The member must be given a reasonable opportunity to respond before a decision is made by the Forum councillors.”