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Pacific Forum and US Indo-Pacific Command Successfully Conclude Workshop on "Youth, Gender, and Preventing Violent Extremism in Southeast Asia"



Bali - December 1, 2023 – Pacific Forum, in collaboration with the US Indo-Pacific Command office of Women, Peace, and Security (USINDOPACOM), successfully concluded a pivotal in-person workshop on "Youth, Gender, and Preventing Violent Extremism in Southeast Asia" over November 29-30, 2023, in Bali, Indonesia. The closed-door event brought together security personnel, Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS) advocates, and women's civil society actors from Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

The 1.5-day workshop emphasized the crucial roles of gender and youth in comprehending and addressing extremism while fostering stronger ties between security personnel and civil society organizations. Police, counterterrorism, and military personnel actively participated in discussions and sessions.

According to the Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) P/CVE Project Lead at Pacific Forum, Jennifer Howe, “The workshop had two overlapping goals: 1) to emphasize the importance of gender and youth in understanding and addressing extremism, and 2) to forge closer ties between security personnel and civil society organizations and representatives who integrate youth and gender in their work to address extremism.”

Dr. Jacqui True delivered a keynote on the impact of gender in extremist group affiliations, exploring the role of misogyny in extremist ideology. Liz Ludan from USINDOPACOM’s Office of Women, Peace and Security, provided an overview of how the Office of Women, Peace and Security integrates gender perspectives into USINDOPACOM objectives and activities in order to advance rule of law, security, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region.

YPS advocates attending the workshop discussed the need to improve access to social, political, and economic justice for both youth and women. In addition, they emphasized that governments should work not just to consult youth but also to enable them to actively participate in policymaking. This approach enables the next generation to collaborate on initiatives aimed at preventing extremism and promoting cohesion and dialogue across communities.



Sittie Janin Gamao, Peace Programme Officer from Ministry of Public Order and Safety in Bangsamoro Region in Muslim Mindanao gives her talk on maintaining peace in Bangsamoro.

Dr. El-Muhammady, participant and representative from International Islamic University emphasized the significance of further conversations with various stakeholders: “Deepening conversation with various stakeholders is vital to learn what other people on the other side are doing. We communicate every day, but not deep enough or at the level of knowledge to know

exactly what others are doing and how it is connected with us. By having deep conversations, we will be able to establish trust – trust, in this work, is a big currency.”



Dr Ahmad El-Muhammady, International Islamic University

The workshop marks the conclusion of Pacific Forum's research project on "Youth, Gender, and Preventing Extremism in Southeast Asia," co-sponsored by the US Indo-Pacific Command. A forthcoming Key Findings document and a final research product in January will provide in-depth analyses of the workshop themes and survey responses. A survey for CSOs and individuals working in YPS, WPS, and P/CVE has also been created to gather perspectives on collaboration with security personnel.

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About Pacific Forum:

Pacific Forum is a non-profit think tank fostering dialogue, cooperation, and policy shaping in the Indo-Pacific region. For more information, visit <https://pacforum.org/>.

About USINDOPACOM's Office of Women, Peace & Security:

USINDOPACOM's Office of Women, Peace & Security (WPS) mainstreams gender perspectives into theater plans, programs, and policies in order to enable the USINDOPACOM enterprise to develop inclusive security strategies that advance a Free and Open Indo-Pacific. For more information, visit <https://www.pacom.mil/About-USINDOPACOM/Women-Peace-and-Security/>

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