



To: IUSY Presidium  
IUSY member organizations  
IUSY secretariat

Dear comrades:

Warm, socialist greetings!

I am writing to express my intent to run as Vice President for the Asia Pacific Committee of the International Union of Socialist Youth (IUSY).

As the International Secretary of Akbayan Youth, I have been active in IUSY for the past year, having joined the World Festival in Albania where we led a conversation on the human rights crisis in the Philippines. I have also participated in the Asia Pacific Committee meeting in Penang where we've exchanged ideas with different activists in building more progressive campaigns in the region. I have also contributed to IUSY's Global Tax Evasion campaign, helping coordinate and initiate an action in the Philippines with the goal of expanding to more countries in the region.

In my bid to run as Vice President, Akbayan Youth seeks to contribute to IUSY's goals in organizing more young activists in the Asia-Pacific. Through my work in Akbayan, I have a wide network of progressive groups and parties in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Thailand and Myanmar that IUSY could help organize through campaigning. As the human rights group co-coordinator of the Network of Young Democratic Asians (NOYDA), a coalition of democracy activists in Asia, I can help IUSY reach out to more grassroots/ social movements in the region to train and empower more young leaders.

The Asia Pacific will be a challenging political terrain to organize in the next few years with the rise of China, the growing aggression of North Korea and the further narrowing of democratic spaces in most countries in the region. My intent to run as Vice President comes with the hope of building movements for free and fair societies in the Asia Pacific.

Sincerely yours,

Justine Raphael Luis C. Balane  
International Secretary, Akbayan Youth



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IUSY Presidium  
IUSY Secretariat



## **Asia-Pacific - A plan for 2018-2020**

The Asia-Pacific region faces many challenges. While we are a diverse region with some strong member organisations and strong and organised skills-bases in some areas, our region faces many political difficulties and instabilities. Our member organisations lack finances and resourcing, political representation and, in some cases, the legal protections many of our friends in other regions enjoy. We are also short in numbers, having just two Vice-Presidents to undertake the work such a large, complex and challenging region entails. With these challenges facing our region, it is hardly surprising that APC struggles to engage with, and grow within, IUSY.

We think the APC has an enormous potential to contribute more to the goals of IUSY, and wish to see our region grow to be the vibrant and strong region we both know it to be. We recognise the need for a coordinated and well-thought-through plan to address the challenges of our region, and have outlined the following priorities that we seek to address during the next (2018-2020) mandate of the IUSY Presidium:

### **Grow the APC region, grow IUSY**

Asia-Pacific is a large region, both by geography and population. While we do well to retain an engaged core group of member organisations, there is still an enormous potential for growth. We would like to re-engage members that we haven't seen for some time, as well as seek out new organisations from countries

identified by APC committee meetings, including South Korea, Hong Kong, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. We plan on using existing members contacts, as well as other organisations that our members are a part of, to reach out to potential new member organisations from these areas and beyond that we believe would be at home within our IUSY family. The difficult political situations in several parts of the Asia-Pacific make it a ripe region to organise leaders and groups. Reaching out and supporting these activist groups could realise IUSY's vision of influencing change in countries where democracy is still assailed.

### **Build regional capacity**

To fulfill our mission in reactivating and reaching out to more youth groups in the region, we believe there is a real need to increase the knowledge and skills of our members. We would like to work with the leadership and secretariat to apply for grants for APC-specific projects that would allow us the resources to run capacity-building projects in the region. We have had extensive discussions identifying potential partners and funding bodies. These trainings are aimed to capacitate our members ability to launch campaigns, build power in their countries and expand the region's bench of leaders.

### **Have a long-term campaign focus**

One of the most pressing challenges in APC is that of human rights abuses in APC member countries. The Philippines, for example, is somewhere where our member organisation would benefit from support and solidarity from IUSY. A global organization like IUSY could use its resources to support young grassroots movements in countries where it's hard to win campaigns. We see the need for a longer term project targeting several member countries in APC that will work to develop campaign skills and capacity, particularly in the human rights space, as a key priority and will seek to work with partners and funders to embark on a long-term campaign work-plan. These campaigns would tackle gender equality and feminism, human rights, economic inequality and other issues, building IUSY's engagement and influence in the region.

We hope this plan will provide the IUSY Congress some insight into our region, its challenges and our plans for the 2018-2020 mandate. We hope that the IUSY World Congress will support our candidacies for Vice Presidents of IUSY from Asia-Pacific for the 2018-2020 mandate.

In solidarity,

Antonia Verstappen & Justine Balane