

CONFERENCE REPORT:

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The 9th ISTR Asia Pacific Regional Conference was held in Tokyo, Japan, on 26-28, August 2015 hosted by Nihon University College of Law. It was a great opportunity to witness a dynamic panorama of research. Quite a large number of papers and panels were presented in this conference, as well as a wide variety of topics around the third sector such as governance and laws, tax regime, policy impact and evaluation, wellbeing, welfare systems, social capital, CSR, fundraising, government and politics, public private partnership, environment, sustainability, social enterprise, and so on. The conference offered an excellent opportunity for encouraging in-depth discussion on these key issues and advancing authentic and creative research works from multidimensional approaches.



The International Program Committee for this conference received nearly 140 paper submissions from over 20 countries. After the rigorous double blind review process, the Committee finally accepted 100 paper presentations in 27 breakout sessions including 3 panel sessions. The number of participants was over 130 including the student staff. Fortunately the size of the conference in terms of participants and presented papers was one of the

largest among ISTR Asia Pacific regional conference series.

The conference offered two plenary sessions with keynote addresses by distinguished high-profile speakers. These sessions gave conference attendees time to examine and discuss how to challenge and cope with regional and global political insecurity, economic crisis and unexpected external shocks that our civil society is confronting. The keynote address for the opening plenary was delivered by a prominent political scientist, Professor Yutaka Tsujinaka of Tsukuba University. He specializes in political and administrative perspectives of interest groups and also has worked



on a large volume of research in civil society and social capital from a public policy perspectives. Professor Tsujinaka addressed the role of civil society in local governance from unique and critical perspectives as well as respond to relevant frontier issues. Three distinguished panelists joined the panel session after the keynote; Mr. Dipendra KC, president of YUWA, Nepal, Professor Lan Yuxin, at the School of Public Policy & Management,

Tsinghua University, China, and Professor Emeritus Tae Kyu Park, at the Department of Economics, Yousei University, Korea. Moderator was Professor Ruth Phillips, at the Social Work and Policy Studies Program, the University of Sydney, Australia. They discussed on local governance issues from their own perspectives, responding to the feedbacks from the floor.

The closing plenary was another highlight of the conference. Mr. Katsuji Imata, board chair of CSO Network Japan and the former deputy secretary general of CIVICUS gave an address on “working across sectors for a transformative shift: new narrative in civil society for the Asia Pacific

and the globe.” The subsequent panel consisted of three eminent panelists; Dr. Maria R. Nindita Radyati, founding director of MM-CSR & executive director of CECT, Trisakti University, Indonesia, Professor Shih-Jung Hsu, at the Department of Land Economics, National Chengchi University, Taiwan, and Professor Juangang Zhu, at the School of Sociology and Anthropology, Sun Yat-sen University, China. Moderator was Professor Rosario Laratta, at the Graduate School of Governance, Meiji University, Japan. They discussed on challenges and opportunities that the regional and global civil society has encountered and will encounter.



On behalf of the International Program Committee, I would like to thank Nihon University College of Law for providing excellent conference facilities, and Professor Yoji Inaba, chair of the Local Host Committee, and his students for their smart and efficient support services. We also wish to acknowledge the Kajima Foundation for their generous grant, which made it possible to provide 20 scholarships for emerging researchers from developing countries. Last but not least, we would like to thank members of JANPORA, Japan NPO

Research Association for their voluntary contributions to conference management in various forms. We hope that the collaborative relationship between ISTR and JANPORA will be fruitful for both parties.