



ASIAN ELECTORAL  
STAKEHOLDERS FORUM IV



## **Election Commission of Sri Lanka and ANFREL all set to hold the Fourth Asian Electoral Stakeholder Forum**

For Immediate Release

Colombo, Sri Lanka

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It is the honor of the Election Commission of Sri Lanka and the Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL) to convene the Fourth Asian Electoral Stakeholders Forum (AESF-IV) in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on August 27 and 28, 2018. The AESF will have as theme *“Advancing Election Transparency and Integrity: Promoting and Defending Democracy Together.”* The Colombo AESF is the first to be held in South Asia.

AESF-IV is an opportunity for Asian election commissions, election observers, non-government organizations, and interstate bodies to gather and discuss the state of elections and democracy in the region. The AESF is the largest gathering of its kind, and is sustained through a strong cooperation between the civil society and election commissions.

The Forum will cover a wide array of crucial election issues like the current state of democracy in Asia, the common electoral challenges in the region, and various good practices employed to make elections better.

The event should culminate with the endorsement of a landmark document, urging election stakeholders from within Asia and beyond to promote and defend democracy in the region. ANFREL and the Election Commission of Sri Lanka hope that through this document, cooperation and collaboration among election stakeholders will be revitalized in order to address the declining quality of democracy in Asia.

His Excellency Maithripala Sirisena, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka will be the guest of honor in the Opening Ceremonies on August 27. Chairperson of the Election



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Commission of Sri Lanka, Hon. Mahinda Deshapriya and ANFREL Spokesperson Mr. Damaso Magbual will be welcoming the election commission representatives and democracy advocates who have traveled to participate in the discussions.

The Colombo AESF will be attended by more than 250 guests from 45 countries. Fifteen Asian election commissions, more than a hundred election monitoring organizations from all over the world, diplomatic missions based in Sri Lanka, international non-governmental organizations, and intergovernmental institutions including the United Nations will be represented at this prestigious event.

The previous AESF gatherings were instrumental in setting benchmarks and guidelines on conducting truly democratic elections which respect internationally recognized human rights and election principles and norms. The first AESF, held in Thailand on 2012, endorsed the Bangkok Declaration on Free and Fair Elections. The second AESF gathered election stakeholders in Dili, Timor Leste on 2015 to create the Dili Indicators of Democratic Elections. Lastly, the Bali AESF, held in 2016, gathered hundreds of democracy advocates and government bodies to craft the Bali Commitment: Eight Keys to Electoral Integrity.

For more information about the AESF, please contact [aesf@anfrel.org](mailto:aesf@anfrel.org).