HIGH-LEVEL PANEL DISCUSSION: EMPOWERING PEOPLE AND ENSURING INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUALITY

Speaker bios

Ms. Suzanne Nam, Moderator

Suzanne Nam is a senior communications professional with 15 years of experience working as a journalist and strategic communications advisor. She has been a contributing editor at Forbes Magazine for over a decade, covering wealth in Asia, and has also written for numerous publications including USA Today, Travel + Leisure, L’Espresso, Vogue and produced radio and television pieces for ABC News, Current TV, Fox News, APM and NPR. Suzanne is passionate about telling stories that can change behaviors and open minds. She believes in encouraging evidence-based decision making by using data in storytelling. Before coming to communications, she practiced law in the United States.

H.E. Ms. Ing Kantha Phavi

Her Excellency Ms. Ing Kantha Phavi has served as Minister of Women’s Affairs of Cambodia since 2004 and her last reappointment was in 2018. Minister Phavi has been instrumental for promoting Gender Equality and Gender Mainstreaming at international, national and sub-national levels. In the region and worldwide, Minister Phavi has contributed to the East Asia Gender Equality Ministerial Meetings, the East Asia Ministerial Forums on Families and the ASEAN Ministerial Meetings on Women. At national level, Minister Phavi has been an architect to levy gender in key policies such as the National Poverty Reduction Strategy; the Cambodian Millennium Development Goals; the Rectangular Strategy for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency; the National Strategic Development Plans; and the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks. Minister Phavi is particularly passionate about promoting women’s economic empowerment, women’s role in decision making and politics and ending violence against women and children.
H.E. Ms. Mereseini Vuniwaqa

The Hon. Ms. Vuniwaqa is Minister of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation of the Government of Fiji. Prior, she worked as a State solicitor for Fiji's Office of the Attorney General. She was appointed as chair of the Telecommunications Authority of Fiji in 2008. From January 2012 to March 2013 she was Acting Permanent Secretary for Justice and acting supervisor of elections. In 2014 and again in 2018, she was elected to Parliament. She was appointed to Cabinet as Minister for Lands and Mineral Resources in September 2014 and in 2018 as Minister for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation. She has been engaged in a number of ESCAP intergovernmental meetings, including disability, civil registration and vital statistics and population issues.

Mr. Monthian Buntan

Mr. Monthian Buntan served as a Senator of the Upper House of the Royal Thai Parliament between 2008 to 2014. He has served in several positions within the organized blind/disability movement in Thailand and on the executive committee of the World Blind Union (WBU) from which he is now holding an honorary life membership status. Mr. Buntan had major impact on the drafting of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). He has received several honors and awards, including an honorary doctorate in Social Science from Chiang Mai University, and most recently, Alumni Achievement Award 2017 from St. Olaf College in Minnesota, USA.

Mr. Bambang Susantono

Dr. Bambang Susantono, as the Vice-President for Knowledge Management and Sustainable Development of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) since 2015, provides strategic leadership to ADB’s knowledge and research agenda. Prior to this, Dr. Susantono was the Acting Minister, and Vice-Minister of Transportation of Indonesia, and Deputy Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development at the Office of Coordinating Ministry for Economic Affairs. He holds a PhD in Infrastructure Planning, Master’s degrees in Transportation Engineering, and City and Regional Planning from the University of California Berkeley with a Bachelor’s degree in Civil Engineering from the Bandung Institute of Technology.
Prof. Eun Mee Kim

Ms. Eun Mee Kim is Professor and Dean at the Graduate School, Ewha Womans University. She is currently PI on a research grant on Korea’s Global Health Strategy focusing on South Korea’s global public health strategy and programs funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation since 2013. She has conducted research comparing emerging and traditional donors, and the relationship between human security and development with a research grant funded by the WCU (World Class University) program through the National Research Foundation of Korea funded by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology of the Republic of Korea. Before coming to Ewha, she was Professor in Sociology at the University of Southern California; and Visiting Scholar at Harvard University and Brown University. Research interests include East Asian development; globalization; development cooperation; multiculturalism, and chaebol.

Mr. Phang Yew Kiat

Yew Kiat Phang is the Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Chong Sing Holdings FinTech Group Limited (CSF), a leading publicly listed FinTech group in Asia. Headquartered in Hong Kong, China, the company successfully established a fully integrated FinTech ecosystem, providing efficient intelligent financial lifestyle services via internet & mobile internet channels. Phang began his career with Standard Chartered Bank (SCB) in 1994. Over his 17 years career in banking, he held various management roles across SCB's corporate and consumer banking businesses, including the appointment as Chief Financial Officer for Indonesia & General Manager for Small Medium Enterprises, Singapore and Malaysia. He also serves as the Chairman of Remuneration Committee & Independent Non-executive Director of Chuan Holdings Limited. Among the non-profit organizations, he serves as the Chairman of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Business Advisory Council Task Force on Digital Economy, and the founding Executive Director of Global Blockchain Business Council (GBBC).