AICHR Operational Guidelines to External Communications Received

Introduction

Since the early practice of receiving letters of concern, grievances and communications, AICHR and AICHR Representatives have responded as appropriate and necessary. Actions taken include conducting consultations with relevant bodies at national and regional levels and replying with further information and views.

The Guidelines provide several guiding steps for AICHR Representatives should they decide to follow up on communication that they receive.

It reflects AICHR's commitment to principled engagement, continued enhancement and update of its modalities, and responsiveness, within the context of its intergovernmental and consensus-based nature.

Any action to be taken by the AICHR as a Commission is subject to the ASEAN principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of ASEAN Member States, consensus, and consultation.

1. Reception and initial consideration of external communications

1.1 Communications shall be submitted in writing and sent to the AICHR email address (aichr@asean.org) or through its website at aichr.org.

1.2 All communications sent to the AICHR shall be acknowledged upon receipt by the Human Rights Division of the ASEAN Secretariat.

1.3 Upon receipt of the communication through the ASEAN Secretariat, such communication is forwarded to the AICHR Representative(s) concerned, and copied to the AICHR Chair for information.

1.4 The AICHR Representative(s) concerned and/or ASEAN Member State(s), as appropriate, may voluntarily act in their country capacity as they deem fit as necessary and at their discretion.

1.5 The AICHR Representative(s) concerned may seek clarification or obtain supplementary information from national and/or regional authorities/agencies (including national human rights institutions, where available), and/or relevant stakeholders including the sender of the communication.

1.6 It is entirely the discretion of the AICHR Representative(s) concerned and ASEAN Member State(s) that is the recipient of the communication on whether the matter should be dealt with at the national level or AICHR or regional level.

2. Discretionary and voluntary follow-up action

The AICHR Representative(s) concerned, as appropriate, may recommend that AICHR undertake any appropriate follow-up actions.

3. Record-keeping by ASEAN Secretariat

3.1 The ASEAN Secretariat, in its supporting role to AICHR may provide technical, administrative, and coordination assistance, as appropriate.

3.2 The ASEAN Secretariat shall maintain a record of all communications received by the AICHR and the information is to be reported and updated at each AICHR meeting. This record is confidential to the AICHR and will not be released to or made accessible to the public.

3.3 The AICHR may, as deemed appropriate, communicate with related parties on matters pertaining to its mandate and functions, in accordance with the applicable ASEAN rules and procedure.

4. The Guidelines may be reviewed periodically or on the request of AICHR Representatives based on evolving needs and experiences of AICHR.

Dated this 13th day of November 2025