(1) **Title**

**Democratization of Communication and Communication for Democratization: Breakthroughs and Challenges in Thailand and Myanmar**

(2) **Convener**

Chosein Yamahata (Aichi Gakuin University, Japan)

Terapatt Vannaruemol (Chiang Mai University, Thailand)

(3) **Description of Panel**

People in Thailand and Myanmar have been facing a set of common struggles such as climate change, conflicts, pandemic, inequality, political exclusion, and social division. In response, an increasing number of people have started to take actions for their societal grievances. They use diverse instruments to communicate with each other, express dissenting views, and organize protests.

Through social media, they can extract an abundance of information in a timely and efficient manner, which is not available from conventional mass media, as well as establish their own platforms to disseminate information and mobilize public opinions. In addition, they can reach out to diverse population inside and outside their communities. Therefore, their grassroots social movements are often more inclusive and pluralistic cutting across ethnic, religious, geographical, social and the boundaries of all kinds. On the other hand, the roles of media also grow increasingly important in preventing unnecessary escalation of tension and public mobilization based on misinformation and fake news as well as promoting local soft power towards a more open society. Therefore, both democratization of communication and communication for democratization are essential for addressing challenges in both societies.

This panel is therefore designed to share the research findings in relation to communication and open society which address issues such as: post-coup or post-conflict community responses, disinformation related to elections, cooperation of media in network, multicultural socio-political processes, and tensions, podcasting in bridging generational divides, grassroots political engagement, and the practice of culture of peace.

(4) **Double Sessions**

**Presenters**:

*Session 1*

1. Dr. Nantasit Kittiwarakul (Chiang Mai University, Thailand)
2. Dr. Makiko Takeda (Aichi Gakuin University, Japan)
3. Kyi Sin (ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore)
4. OPEN SLOT

*Session 2*

1. Dr. Mon Mon Myat (Payap University, Thailand)
2. Dr. Ma Thida (PEN International, Germany)
3. Abhibhu Kitikamdhorn (Chiang Mai University, Thailand)
4. OPEN SLOT

**Discussant:**

Aye Chan Naing (Democratic Voice of Burma, Myanmar)