

“Mongolia becomes first Asian country to adopt law protecting human rights defenders”



Ulaanbaatar /MONTSAME/. At its plenary session dated April 1, Parliament of Mongolia, the State Great Khural, adopted a Law on Legal Status of Human Rights Defenders. The law will enter into force on July 1, 2021.

On April 5, members of parliament Ts.Munkhtsetseg and D.Tsogtbaatar held a press briefing in connection with the newly-approved law, highlighting that Mongolia now becomes the first country in Asia to provide legal protection for human rights defenders.

MP Munkhtsetseg said, “Mongolia is now a pioneer in Asia to approve legislative regulation to protect people, civil society organizations and communities who stand up for human rights. Although Mongolia has joined international treaties and conventions of human rights promotion in the past three decades, there have been a number of cases of violations committed against human rights defenders, such as attacks against them and threats to their lives. Therefore, the protection of human rights defenders had become indispensable for efforts to promote human rights. The initiative and preparation of the bill were participated by international organizations, civil society unions, and experts.”

Commending the law on human rights defenders’ protection as a step forward taken by the Mongolian legislative system, especially in the area of human rights promotion, MP Tsogtbaatar highlighted that the law is introducing a new concept of ‘human rights defenders’ in the country’s legislation. He then assured that the parliament of Mongolia will cooperate with government, non-government and civil society organizations for effective implementation of the law and development of the human rights system.

Following the approval of the law, amendments will be made to the law on Human Rights Commission to add a new member responsible for the matters of human rights defenders to the composition of the Human Rights Commission and establish a committee to protect the human rights defenders. The committee will be made up of members chosen from existing government and non-government organizations.

The law on the legal status of human rights defenders, which aims to establish legal grounds for respect, protection, promotion, and fulfillment of the rights of human rights defender through identifying actions, rights and prohibitions apply to human rights defenders as well as common obligations of state organizations and officials, non-governmental organizations, and business entities, and protection mechanism for human rights defenders.

As defined in the law, human rights defenders are individuals who act separately or in association with others to promote the realization of human rights and freedoms and take part in respecting and protecting the human dignity and commonly recognized principles and norms of international law through non-violent and peaceful means.

