

**ASEAN INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
(AICHR) PRESS RELEASE ON HUMAN RIGHTS,
TELECOMMUNICATION NETWORK FRAUD AND ONLINE
SCAMMING**

26 SEPTEMBER 2025

The ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) recognises the growing concern over telecommunication network fraud and online scamming that exploit vulnerable individuals, violate fundamental rights, and erode public trust and personal security in digital and financial systems. These crimes have developed into a cross-border concern and have spawned upstream and downstream crimes, namely money laundering, illicit drug trafficking, people smuggling, corruption, and trafficking in persons which have seriously endangered the lives and properties of the people in the region.

AICHR is particularly concerned that these crimes have resulted in human rights violations across the region. AICHR affirms that all individuals affected, including those deceived into exploitative criminal enterprises and those who suffer economic loss, are rights-holders entitled to protection, remedy, and redress.

Recognising the current state of affairs, AICHR reaffirms the importance of ASEAN Declaration Against Trafficking in Persons, Particularly Women and Children (2004); ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (2015); ASEAN Declaration to Prevent and Combat Cybercrime (2017); ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Combating Trafficking in Persons Caused by the Abuse of Technology (2023); Vientiane Declaration on Enhancing Law Enforcement Cooperation Against Online Job Scams (2024); Melaka Declaration on Combatting Transnational Crime (2025); ASEAN Declaration on Countering People Smuggling in Southeast Asia (2025); and ASEAN Declaration on Combatting Cybercrime and Online Scams (2025) in dealing with these complex and multifaceted challenges.

AICHR further notes that law enforcement efforts to combat these activities can be strengthened by taking human rights principles into consideration. All identified victims are entitled to protection, support, and redress, grounded in victim-centred approaches that ensure access to justice, affordable legal aid, asset recovery, and appropriate compensation in accordance with national laws. There should also be a clear differentiation between victims and perpetrators. Further, in cases involving trafficking in persons, regional coordination can be enhanced for the repatriation of affected individuals according to human rights principles, and in consultation with the individuals, countries involved and relevant stakeholders, taking into account national laws.

*Adopted at the Special Meeting 3/2025 of AICHR
26 September 2025*

AICHR encourages ASEAN Member States to enhance efforts towards the realisation of a region free from telecommunication network fraud and online scamming. AICHR stands ready to support ASEAN initiatives along this endeavour.

Dated this 26 September 2025