**The Encompassing Nature of SDG Goal 16 – May 9, 2017**

**Report from Seminar in Tokyo**

CSO Network Japan – in cooperation with Japan Civil Society Network on SDGs (SDG Japan), Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation (JANIC) and Japan NPO Center – organized a seminar on **SDG Goal 16 and Civil Society** in Tokyo on May 9, 2017.

Among the SDG goals, the seminar focused on 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) and the role of civil society. Attended by about 30 people from civil society organizations (CSOs), university professors, government bodies and others, it also marked the first time in Japan to introduce the Community of Democracies (CoD) and its effort to produce supplemental indicators for Goal 16.



For CSOs, SDG 16 is an encompassing, fundamental goal that enables achievement of other goals as it contains accountable institutions, participatory and representative decision-making, access to information, and the protection of fundamental freedoms. At CoD – which is an inter-governmental organization composed of 110 countries and for which Japan serves as one of 30 members of the Governing Council – the work is under way to produce supplemental indicators for Goal 16. The CoD has been discussing that existing 23 UN mandated-indicators would not be adequate or sufficient to measure progress of Goal 16’s 12 targets.

The seminar featured Anselmo Lee, representing ADN (Asia Democracy Network) and ADA (Asia Development Alliance). Anselmo is a member of CoD’s International Steering Committee for civil society, Katsuji Imata of CSO Network Japan who is a civil society focal point for Japan for the CoD also spoke. Together, they explained the genesis and rationale for CoD’s work on supplemental indicators and its focus. At a recent expert meeting in Oslo, strong interest was expressed for Target 3 (Rule of law and equal access to justice), Target 6 (Effective, accountable and transparent institutions), Target 7 (Responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making), and Target 10 (Public access to information and protection of fundamental freedoms), among others. The seminar also welcomed Mr. Shu Nakagawa, Director of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs Division of the Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who spoke about the Japanese government’s involvement in the CoD.

In the second half of the seminar, Ms. Yukiko Miki, President of Access-Info Clearinghouse Japan, spoke about the relevance of SDG16 to Japan, especially in relation to the importance of access to information in policymaking in both domestic and international affairs.