

2012 STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF ASEAN ON THE 45TH ANNIVERSARY OF ASEAN: THE WAY FORWARD

Adopted in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 4 April 2012

1. Inspired by, and united under the ASEAN motto "One Vision, One Identity, One Community," ASEAN has been intensifying its efforts to attain a fully integrated, people-oriented and rules-based ASEAN, and working to ensure concrete achievements in the targeted areas, as mandated in the Roadmap for an ASEAN Community Building, 2009 - 2015.
2. ASEAN has made significant achievements over the past 45 years since its establishment. Starting from its inception in 1967, with its original four Member States, the successful expansion to ten Member States in 1999, the adoption of the ASEAN Charter in 2008 and the Roadmap for an ASEAN Community Building by 2015, ASEAN has developed into a mature, credible and trustworthy regional organisation.
3. With the entry into force of the ASEAN Charter in December 2008, ASEAN, with its legal personality, has been moving steadily on track with a number of newly established organs, including the ASEAN Coordinating Council (ACC), the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) Council, the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Council, and the ASEAN SocioCultural Community (ASCC) Council, the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) and the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR). With these new organs and bodies, ASEAN's institutional framework and mechanisms have been further strengthened in order to advance its interests, both individually and collectively.
4. With the Roadmap for an ASEAN Community Building, 2009-2015, the ASEAN Leaders had strategically set out a clear vision and direction to achieve the Community building by 2015, in order to serve the peoples of ASEAN.
5. One of ASEAN's significant achievements over the years has been in the area of peace, security and stability. First established in 1976, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) continues to be a key instrument governing inter-state relations. The accession to the TAC by eighteen non-ASEAN Member States has reinforced the importance of the TAC and the principles enshrined therein.
6. In addition to the well-established ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), which is the premier political and security dialogue mechanism in the Asia-Pacific region, the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus) was established in October 2010 to promote regional dialogue and cooperation on peace and defence-security issues and help ensure ASEAN centrality on matters affecting the region's security.
7. The establishment of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) is another milestone in ASEAN's recent history. The AICHR has already started its work on drafting the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration.
8. ASEAN's increasing role in regional and international affairs is well recognised, particularly after the entry into force of the ASEAN Charter in December 2008, as evidenced by the accreditation of 63 non-ASEAN Ambassadors to ASEAN and the establishment of 30 ASEAN Committees in Third Countries around the globe.

9. On the economic front, the ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (AFTA) launched in 1993 is a foundation for the region's economic integration and development. Within ten years, the AFTA has been fully realised in the ASEAN-6 Member States (Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand), and all tariffs in intra-ASEAN trade among them have been removed since 2010.
10. ASEAN has concluded the Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with six countries participating in the East Asia Summit (EAS), namely, Australia and New Zealand, China, India, Japan, and the Republic of Korea. Of these FTAs, the ASEAN-China FTA and the ASEAN-Korea FTA have already been realised for the ASEAN-6 and the concerned FTA partner on 1 January 2010. In light of the rapid regional and global developments, it has become imperative for ASEAN to move beyond its current FTAs to enhance its centrality in the emerging regional economic architecture. Through the ASEAN Framework on Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, adopted by the Leaders in November 2010, ASEAN aims to become the primary driving force in establishing a comprehensive economic partnership comprising its Member States, ASEAN's FTA partners and eventually other external economic partners.
11. In enhancing a competitive investment environment ASEAN has adopted a new investment agreement to replace the two investment-related agreements signed in 1987 and 1998. The new agreement-- the ASEAN Comprehensive Investment Agreement (ACIA), which contains comprehensive and improved provisions at par with international best practices on investment liberalization, protection, facilitation and promotion, has entered into force on 29 March 2012. Through ACIA, ASEAN aims to create a free and open investment environment for ASEAN.
12. In the field of social development, the ASEAN Governments have worked very closely with international organisations and civil society organisations (CSOs) such as the United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) in addressing the HIV epidemic. In 2011, ASEAN Leaders adopted the ASEAN Declaration of Commitment: Getting to Zero New HIV Infections, Zero Discrimination, Zero AIDS-Related Deaths. Current initiatives are underway to implement the objectives of this Declaration.
13. Considerable progress has also been made in other sectors like education, youth development, culture, information and the arts, among others.
14. As part of efforts to build the people-oriented community where the role and involvement of all stakeholders are valued, the ASEAN Leaders continue to undertake meetings/interactions with the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA), representatives of civil society and youth leaders.
15. Various initiatives across the broad spectrum of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint are currently being undertaken. One such example is the Mobilisation Framework that sets fifteen priority areas aimed at promoting disability inclusive development in ASEAN that is currently being finalized. Furthermore, the Inaugural Meeting of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Women (AMMW) has been scheduled for October 2012 in Vientiane, Lao PDR.
16. The implementation of the IAI Work Plan II (2009-2015) remains a priority effort in regional integration and narrowing the development gap among the ASEAN Member States. To this end, the support and assistance by ASEAN Member States and ASEAN Dialogue Partners and other development external parties have been instrumental.

17. The ASEAN Connectivity is a key step towards realizing the ASEAN Community of continued economic growth, reduced development gap, and improved connectivity among the ASEAN Member States, and between Member States and the rest of the world by enhancing physical, institutional and people-to-people linkages at the national and regional levels. In this regard, the ASEAN Leaders adopted a Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) in October 2010 and in November 2011, the Leaders agreed on the need to expand the ASEAN Connectivity beyond the region to ASEAN Plus Three Connectivity. To expedite the implementation of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity, it is important to ensure that effective modalities of coordination and resource mobilisation strategies are in place to benefit all Member States through enhancing trade, investment, tourism, people-to-people exchanges and development.
18. In tandem with ASEAN's accomplishments at regional cooperation and integration, ASEAN's global profile and delivery at the global level received an impetus when the ASEAN Chair and the Secretary-General of ASEAN were invited to the G-20 Summits. ASEAN's presence at future G-20 Summits is intended to align and coordinate regional policies with the global economy and to have at the 20th ASEAN Summits.
19. ASEAN has made important achievements through many activities and processes under the frameworks of the ASEAN + 1, ASEAN+ 3, ASEAN, ADMM Plus, the ARF, and the EAS whereby ASEAN continues to maintain its central role in these mechanisms.
20. Under the theme "ASEAN: One Community, One Destiny," the Heads of State/Government of the ASEAN Member States, gathered in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, for the 20th ASEAN Summit and on the occasion of 45th Anniversary of ASEAN, pledged to undertake the following in order to build the ASEAN Community by 2015 and beyond:
 - a. To maintain the momentum of ASEAN's progress and development;
 - b. To continue ASEAN's priority on community building efforts by 2015 with effective, efficient and timely implementation of the Roadmap for ASEAN Community (2009-2015) especially the strategic thrusts provided for in the Roadmap;
 - c. To further accelerate and deepen regional integration by further implementing the IAI Work Plan II as integration is an essential pre-requisite of community-building;
 - d. To undertake concrete steps to realize ASEAN Connectivity through effective implementation of the strategic thrusts provided for in the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity and other initiatives such as ASEAN Plus Three connectivity and beyond;
 - e. To continue enhancing ASEAN's central role in the regional architecture by focusing on ASEAN's engagement with all external partners and the global community, particularly the leading role of ASEAN in regional initiatives, such as the ASEAN+1 processes, the ASEAN+3 process, EAS, ARF, G-20 and the UN;
 - f. To ensure that ASEAN will address regional peace-building and peace-management more effectively taking into account the provisions in the ASEAN Charter, the TAC and other international principles;
 - g. To support the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus) as a mechanism to promote practical cooperation between ASEAN and its key partners in defence and security issues with a view to maintaining regional peace and security;

- h. To continue our efforts on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament and to have the Nuclear Weapon States to accede to the Protocol of the SEANWFZ Treaty as early as possible;
 - i. To strengthen ASEAN cooperation among the Member States and with Dialogue Partners and to deal with challenges facing ASEAN, such as natural disasters, food and energy security, terrorism, transnational crimes, human trafficking and other issues;
 - j. To promote democracy, enhance good governance and the rule of law, and promote and protect human rights and social justice;
 - k. To promote principles of the TAC and encourage the accession of non-ASEAN Member States to the TAC;
 - l. To strengthen ASEAN cooperation on disaster management and emergency response through the full operationalisation of the established AHA Centre;
 - m. To strengthen cooperation in addressing non-traditional security issues, including transnational crimes and other transboundary challenges;
 - n. To ensure full implementation of the DOC and look forward to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the DOC at the 15th ASEAN-China Summit in November 2012, in Phnom Penh;
 - o. To promote ASEAN as a single market and production base and intensify efforts in making ASEAN a single investment destination;
 - p. To continue to further engage with external partners, including all ASEAN Dialogue Partners, regional groupings such as the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), MERCOSUR, RIO Group, South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (CSC) to boost relations and cooperation, and to gather their support for ASEAN's initiatives, including the ASEAN Community building process, Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI), ASEAN Connectivity as well as ASEAN centrality in the evolving regional architecture.
 - q. To work closely with the Plus Three countries to undertake meaningful activities to commemorate the 15th anniversary of the ASEAN Plus Three cooperation, and with Canada and the U.S. to mark the 35th Anniversary of ASEAN-Canada and ASEAN-U.S. Dialogue Relations, respectively. We also look forward to the convening of the ASEANIndia Commemorative Summit in India, in December 2012, to celebrate the 20th anniversary of ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations.
21. As the Chair of ASEAN in 2012, Cambodia will work to ensure the successful achievement of the strategic thrusts provided for in the Roadmap, especially to gear up its efforts to realise regional integration, and thus contribute to the realisation of the ASEAN Community by 2015, a Community of prosperity and development, with the theme of the "ASEAN: One Community, One Destiny."