

On the importance of ASEAN

“Unlike the protectionist trend elsewhere, ASEAN remains committed to free trade, regional integration and open economies... When concluded, RCEP (The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership of ASEAN and six other economies) will be one of the biggest free trade areas in the world.”

- Ambassador Tommy Koh, Chairman of the CIL Governing Board and Ambassador-at-Large at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Singapore

“I have witnessed how the interests and concerns of Member States are amplified internationally when ASEAN speaks with one voice. ASEAN is also capable of summoning a spirit of unity which is unparalleled. Even when faced with the thorniest of issues, leaders and officials work tirelessly to find common ground, and achieve agreement by consensus. This is not a trivial undertaking, given the diversity of the region we sit in.”

- Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Singapore

“ASEAN itself manifests what could be achieved – with the requisite political will and diplomatic persistence – to fundamentally transform a region from one marked by conflict and trust deficit to one of stability and strategic trust.”

- Dr. Marty Natalegawa, Foreign Minister of Indonesia (2009-14) and author of “Does ASEAN Matter? a view from within” (2018)

“We in Southeast Asia, we have never been more important in the world, and relatively speaking now even more given the unclear situation in Europe.”

- Dr Surin Pitsuwan, former ASEAN Secretary-General

Feedback from participants of the 2018 ASEAN Law Academy

“I loved the Academy! I learned so much and made very interesting realisations about the possibilities for ASEAN and probably what is needed to be done to achieve integration. My original ignorance on the matter has been replaced with optimism and hope.”

“The quality of practicum questions was high, the practicalities of issues that were brought and because the delegates were high quality too. Please continue to invite ASEAN civil servants to participate. This helps us to know each other better in an intensive environment; a few will likely rise to national prominence in due course.”

“The practicum was actually really helpful for those government officials whose work involves negotiations, whether of a legal instrument or otherwise.”

“Excellent trainers, excellent materials, very relevant and interesting topics and excellent organising. Thank you very much! I got a lot of useful information, greatly increased my interest in and positive attitude towards ASEAN, and made great friends in other ASEAN states.”

“Great balance between the theory and actual practices.”