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one identity
one community



ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

ASEAN 2020: Cohesive and Responsive

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established on 8 August 1967. The Member States are Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam.

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ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

ASEAN 2020: Cohesive and Responsive

**The ASEAN Secretariat
Jakarta**



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Foreword

The period covered by this Annual Report, June 2019 – May 2020, was an exciting time for ASEAN and the Jakarta-based ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC). Various initiatives and activities to boost regional integration and cooperation in political-security, economic integration, and socio-cultural development – all core functions of ASEAN Community – continued to be carried out. ASEAN's relations with Dialogue Partners, Sectoral Dialogue Partners, Development Partners, and other external parties were further reinforced, thereby ensuring tangible results that significantly complement the ASEAN Community-building efforts.

On 8 August 2019, in conjunction with the celebration of the 52nd ASEAN anniversary in the presence of the President of Republic of Indonesia and Foreign Ministers of all ASEAN Member States, the new ASEC twin-tower building was inaugurated. Both towers are located next to ASEC's former site, now renamed "Heritage Office". The new ASEC office is now operating in full swing, while "Heritage Office" is presently undergoing minor refurbishments to welcome the moving-in of ASEAN Dialogue Partners and donor agencies. I thank the Government of Indonesia for its unwavering assistance in strengthening the ASEC operation. With the expanded spaces, ASEC is better equipped in its coordinator's role in supporting the ASEAN Community building efforts, especially since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Indeed, this pandemic was an unprecedented challenge confronted by the region since the Asian financial crisis. By mid-2020, it was clear that COVID-19 has

irreversibly transformed the world, and the road towards recovery shall be a long and winding process. Still, ASEAN – under Viet Nam's able chairmanship – remained focused on endeavoring vital milestone exercises. One of these is the Mid-Term Review of the implementation of ASEAN Community 2025 Blueprints, which is pivotal in assessing the progress, identifying the challenges, and evaluating the implementation gaps. The outcome of the review shall be featured in our next annual report.

In spite of the COVID-19, the successful convening of the 36th ASEAN virtual Summit was a clear illustration of ASEAN's solidarity manifested in concrete regional cooperation. Together with two Special Summits in April 2020, the 36th ASEAN Summit has, among others, reaffirmed the need for a regional post-COVID-19 recovery plan. ASEC, too, has been providing uninterrupted support to the ASEAN Member States. It continued to be in operation, and hosted or facilitated 300 video-conference meetings online, averaging about three virtual meetings per working day during the second quarter of 2020. Through such actions, ASEAN and ASEC displayed assurances to reinforce the region's priorities of securing peace and order, economic growth and prosperity, and social cohesion and integration.

If there is any lesson out of this COVID-19 episode, it is to reiterate that a global crisis needs international cooperation. No single country can wrestle any calamity alone. Tackling COVID-19 and its socio-economic impacts demands solidarity and action at all levels globally.

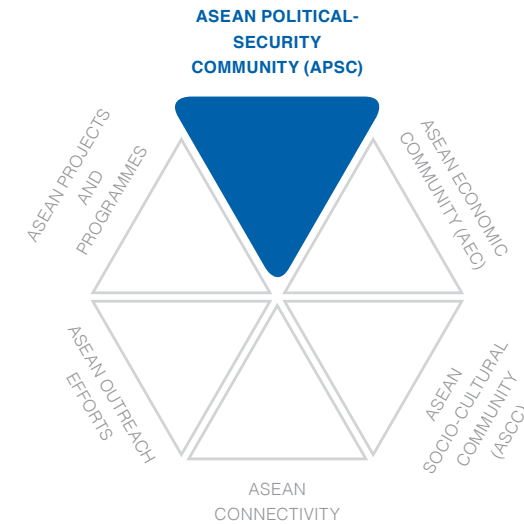
Likewise, it is only via constructive and collaborative engagement that ASEAN can overcome the pandemic's challenges. The ASEAN 2020 Chairmanship theme, under Viet Nam, of **"Cohesive and Responsive"** clearly resonates this.

It is timely to further strengthen the regional cooperation by proactively working on the necessary reforms, leveraging on global expertise and mechanisms, as appropriate, for our post-pandemic recovery plan which will involve collaboration among industries, private sector and other stakeholders, while placing our people and their well-being at the core. The ultimate task is for ASEAN to have a robust, holistic and practical recovery framework to mitigate the socio-economic effects of this pandemic, while propelling economic trajectory.

To this, ASEAN has much to offer. ●

Dato Lim Jock Hoi
Secretary-General of ASEAN

ASEAN POLITICAL- SECURITY COMMUNITY



▲ ASEAN Leaders and external partners convene in Bangkok for the 35th ASEAN Summit in 2019.

A Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN

Cohesive and Responsive, the theme of Viet Nam's ASEAN Chairmanship for 2020, has been tested by the COVID-19 pandemic that has gripped the region and the world. Conceptualised prior to the outbreak, the goal of the ASEAN Chair—enhancing cohesiveness—was intended to further ASEAN unity and solidarity, increase economic integration, deepen ASEAN awareness and identity, and sustain its work toward a people-centred Community.

On the bright side, the pandemic has given ASEAN Member States (AMS) an opportunity to further enhance solidarity and unity, specifically through combatting the pandemic, pursuing economic integration amid fall out from the disease's spread, and reinforcing the ASEAN Community's people-centred approach, since ASEAN's peoples are most directly affected.

This commitment to cohesion was evident at ASEAN's highest level, when at the initiative of Viet Nam as ASEAN Chair, the ASEAN Leaders assembled for the Special ASEAN Summit on COVID-19 on 14 April 2020. This Summit, the first to be held by teleconference,

showed how ASEAN can quickly adapt to changing circumstances—and demonstrated how AMS have been working together, as a family, to fight the virus. The Leaders demonstrated their commitment by approving the Declaration of the Special ASEAN Summit on Coronavirus Disease 2019.

The Declaration called on relevant ASEAN Ministerial and Sectoral Bodies to develop concrete responses to the pandemic, by, for example, enhancing information exchanges and sharing best practices in preventing, containing, and controlling the pandemic, and by empowering existing regional public health and emergency response mechanism. Other measures included enhancing the role of the ASEAN Secretary-General (SG) as the coordinator of public health emergencies; keeping ASEAN markets open for trade and investment and to sustain supply chain connectivity; and developing an ASEAN master plan on the post-COVID-19 recovery.

Convening the Special ASEAN Summit aimed to bolster confidence and to reassure the peoples of ASEAN of their Leaders' collective commitment to address the pandemic in the short term as well as the long run.



The Declaration reaffirmed work previously undertaken by Ministerial and Sectoral Bodies after the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared COVID-19 a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) on 30 January 2020.

Initially, Viet Nam, as ASEAN Chair, issued the Chairman's Statement on ASEAN's Collective Response to the Outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 on 15 February 2020, demonstrating ASEAN's commitment to responding to possible regional outbreaks.

A few days later, on 19 February 2020, ASEAN Defence Ministers, during their Retreat in Ha Noi, Viet Nam, issued a Joint Statement on Defence Cooperation Against Disease Outbreaks, reflecting their Sector's potential contributions to the fight against the virus, particularly

through the ASEAN Centre of Military Medicine (ACMM) and the Network of ASEAN Chemical, Biological, and Radiological (CBR) Defence Experts.

Subsequently, the ACMM published spot reports on the regional COVID-19 situation and convened a Table Top Exercise (TTX) on 27 May 2020 to analyse gaps in military medical services' response to COVID-19, and to share best practices among Ministries of Health of ASEAN Member States. Meanwhile, the CBR Network will organise a workshop in June 2020 to share scientific research and best practices in managing COVID-19, as well as to identify opportunities for collaboration.

Following the issuance of the ASEAN Chair's Statement, a Special ASEAN Coordinating Council (ACC) on COVID-19 was convened in Vientiane, Lao PDR,

▲ Viet Nam, as ASEAN 2020 Chair, holds a Special Summit on COVID-19, joined by ASEAN Leaders online.

ASEAN has also closely engaged its external partners, including through the Special ASEAN Plus Three (China, Japan, the Republic of Korea) Summit on COVID-19, conducted by teleconference.



▲ ASEAN Leaders join hands the ASEAN way at the 35th ASEAN Summit.

on 20 February 2020. The ACC discussed how ASEAN might strengthen cooperation to fight the disease, including through the timely sharing of information.

To ensure that an all-ASEAN approach was incorporated in the region's COVID-19 response, the ACC approved the establishment of the ASEAN Coordinating Council Working Group on Public Health Emergencies (ACCWG-PHE), which held its inaugural meeting on 31 March 2020 by teleconference. The Meeting, attended by representatives of relevant Sectoral Bodies from all of ASEAN's Community Pillars, resulted in a set of recommendations that were approved by the 25th ACC Meeting on 9 April 2020 and was presented to ASEAN Leaders at the Special ASEAN Summit on COVID-19.

ASEAN has also closely engaged its external partners, including through the Special ASEAN Plus Three (China, Japan, the Republic of Korea) Summit on COVID-19, conducted by teleconference.

Through these institutional mechanisms, ASEAN has responded quickly and effectively to a crisis that has had tremendous impact on AMS and on ASEAN's peoples, as well. Responsiveness, the second focus of Viet Nam's 2020 ASEAN Chairmanship theme, underscores the importance of promoting ASEAN proactivity, seizing opportunities, and rapidly addressing challenges due to changes in the regional and global landscape.

Enhancing Responsiveness

The Sectoral Bodies of the ASEAN Political-Security Community continue to enhance their capacities to ensure that they remain responsive to challenges. For example, the Defence Sector continues to mobilise resources to protect the people of ASEAN. Complementing other initiatives, the Sector established the Network of ASEAN CBR Defence Experts in November 2019.

The Network aims to provide timely, adequate, and effective assistance as part of an integrated response in the event of a regional CBR incident, such as those resulting from emerging/deliberately-emerging diseases, chemical weapon agents, and radiological terrorism.

On humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the ASEAN Militaries Ready Group on HADR has been finalised, and, upon adoption, will serve as technical guidelines for ASEAN Militaries when assisting affected AMS. Similarly, to develop skills in detecting, preventing, and responding to cyber incidents, the ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on Cyber Security held its first TTX in August 2019. The exercise tested, among other things, the communications and escalation procedures of the defence establishments of all 18 ADMM-Plus countries.

On security cooperation, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) is entering its 27th year, and is implementing Work Plans on Preventive Diplomacy, Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime, Disaster Relief, Maritime Security, and Security of and in the Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT Security).

The ARF is currently developing the ARF Ha Noi Plan of Action II (2020-2025), which, once adopted, will reaffirm the core principles of the ARF, and set the course of ARF's cooperation for the next five years. A Guide to ARF Processes, Procedures, Practices, and Protocols is also being developed to reaffirm and clarify the roles and functions of all ARF mechanisms, as well as to standardise ARF procedures.

In the last year, ARF adopted the ARF Statement on Aviation Partnership: Soaring Ahead Together, the ARF Statement on Preventing and Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism Conducive to Terrorism (VECT), and the Joint Statement on Promoting the Women, Peace and Security Agenda at the ASEAN Regional Forum at the 26th ARF in Bangkok, Thailand, in August 2019. These Statements affirmed ARF's commitment to ensuring a safe and secure global environment by strengthening information sharing and building confidence among its 27 participants.

Borders, Human Rights, and Transnational Crime

The dominance of COVID-19 on the list of ASEAN's challenges highlights the need for border management cooperation, an area that ASEAN Leaders deemed important in 2019. Work is underway to develop an ASEAN border management roadmap that is expected to strike a balance between facilitating cross-border trade, the movement of people, and the integrity of the national boundaries of AMS.

Transnational crime remains a key challenge for ASEAN, which continues to engage various national agencies and entities to fight it, with cross-Sectoral and cross-Pillar coordination remaining key in ASEAN's approach, particularly in tackling trafficking in persons (TIP) and terrorism.

Emulating the multi-Sectoral collaboration of the Bohol TIP Work Plan 2017-2020, the Work Plan of the Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism (2019-2025)—referred to as the Bali Work Plan—was adopted at the 13th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC) in Bangkok, Thailand, in November 2019. This plan brings together 20 ASEAN Sectoral Bodies, entities, and organs from all of ASEAN's Community Pillars to conduct projects and activities to prevent radicalisation and violent extremism, counter radicalisation and promote deradicalisation, strengthen law enforcement and national legislation, and promote partnership and regional cooperation.

ASEAN continues to monitor the progress of cooperation in its fight against narcotics. The First Internal Review of the ASEAN Work Plan in Securing Communities Against Illicit Drugs 2016-2025 was conducted in 2019, and stated that almost 80 percent of the activities defined by the Work Plan had been undertaken. Through their annual ASEAN Drug Monitoring Report, AMS continue to share information on national policies and efforts to stop the flow of illicit drugs. The latest Report was launched at the 40th ASEAN Senior Officials on Drug Matters (ASOD) Meeting in Siem Reap, Cambodia, in August 2019. ASEAN also agreed to continue its commitment to circumvent the regional trafficking and manufacture of

illicit drugs by extending the ASEAN Cooperation Plan to Tackle Illicit Drug Production and Trafficking in the Golden Triangle from 2017-2019 to 2020-2022.

Meanwhile, ASEAN continues to remain responsive to the promotion and protection of human rights in the region, reaching an important milestone with the completion of the ASEAN Inter-Governmental Commission of Human Rights' (AICHR) Five-Year Work Plan 2016-2020. AICHR continues to harness efforts to advocate for complementarities between human rights and sustainable development; to emphasise the importance of respecting social, economic, and civil rights; and to influence policy discourse and formulation by relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies, in areas such as combatting hate speech and disinformation while preserving freedom of expression, and by promoting gender equality and women's economic empowerment while eliminating violence against women and girls.

Reaching out to ASEAN's peoples remains a priority for AICHR. The Jakarta-AICHR Human Rights Dialogue 2019 marked the third forum between AICHR, civil society organisations (CSO), and other stakeholders on the promotion and protection of human rights in ASEAN. The AICHR Youth Debate on Human Rights 2019: Partnership for Sustainability provided a unique platform for young people in ASEAN to express their views on human rights while learning firsthand the importance of teamwork through collaboration between cross-national debate teams.

Noting the state of human rights amid public health emergencies, ASEAN, through AICHR, has underlined the importance of integrating human rights values and the principles of non-discrimination, participation, and inclusion in the ASEAN Community's response to COVID-19, as well as to minimise the socio-economic impact of the pandemic.

Cohesiveness in Crisis

Beyond its response to COVID-19, ASEAN continues to prioritise a cohesive response in other high-priority areas, such as when working to turn the South China Sea into an area of peace, stability, and prosperity; preserve the Southeast Asian region as a nuclear weapons-free zone; and promote ASEAN's collective efforts in Rakhine State.

Maintaining peace and stability in the South China Sea continues to be a priority, with AMS and China remaining committed to the full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC), and the early conclusion of an effective and substantive Code of Conduct (COC) in the South China Sea. Parties have completed the first reading of the single draft COC negotiating text (SDNT), as announced in July 2019. The second reading of the SDNT is expected to commence in 2020.

ASEAN remains committed to keeping Southeast Asia free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. As part of implementing its Plan of Action to Strengthen the Implementation of the Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) Treaty (20182022), the Practical Arrangements between ASEAN and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in the Areas of Nuclear Safety, Security, and Safeguards as well as Nuclear Technologies and Their Applications was signed in September 2019, paving the way for robust collaboration between the organisations. Another notable development is ASEAN's submission of the Memorandum of Activities Relating to the SEANWFZ Treaty to the 2020 Review Conference on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in April 2020.

Collectively, ASEAN continues to support the Government of Myanmar in facilitating repatriation of displaced persons to Rakhine State. Following the completion of a Preliminary Needs Assessment (PNA) last year, implementation of its recommendations has been ongoing. The Ad-Hoc Support Team of the ASEAN Secretariat was established in February 2020 to facilitate the implementation of regional activities in support of repatriation.

Cohesiveness and ASEAN's External Partners

External relations have always been important to ASEAN Community building. ASEAN has over the years ensured that it remains cohesive when dealing with external partners, while working collaboratively to accrue benefits for AMS, particularly on emerging issues, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.



▲ The ASEAN Leaders, with Secretary-General of ASEAN Dato Lim Jock Hoi, at the MoU signing ceremony between ASEAN and FIFA.

Immediately after the conclusion of the ASEAN Leaders Special Summit on COVID-19, the Special ASEAN Plus Three Summit on COVID-19 was held by teleconference. The Summit issued a Joint Statement affirming the shared commitment of the ASEAN Plus Three countries to strengthen cooperation and mutual support to contain the pandemic's spread and mitigate its socio-economic impact.

ASEAN also convened a series of teleconferences with Australia, China, the European Union (EU), Russia and the U.S. to exchange information on developments in response to pandemics and to discuss how to strengthen cooperation.

Dialogue Partners continue to support ASEAN through funding, technical assistance, and by sharing best experiences in the area of public health, including responding to communicable and infectious diseases, and pandemics, the mitigation of biological threats, and

other health threats. Several Dialogue Partners also provided support with the procurement of medical supplies and equipment for several AMS.

On transnational crime, a milestone was reached in ASEAN-Republic of Korea (ROK) relations in November 2019, with the convening of the inaugural ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC) + the ROK Consultation. New cooperative work plans on transnational crime were also adopted with Canada, China, the EU, the ROK, and the U.S. in 2019. Meanwhile, ASEAN's Defence Sector continues to engage eight external partners through various modalities under the ADMM-Plus while 17 external partners are engaged on security issues through the ARF.

On the promotion and protection of human rights, ASEAN, through AICHR, maintains regular engagements with its multilateral partners, notably in hosting the second interface meeting with the United Nations (UN)



▲ ▶ ASEAN artists and youth perform at the opening ceremony of the 36th ASEAN Summit in Ha Noi.

in Jakarta, and in leading the ASEAN Delegation at the Third ASEAN-EU Policy Dialogue on Human Rights, held in Brussels, in November 2019.

Promoting and deepening relations with ASEAN's Dialogue, Sectoral and Development Partners has been critical in creating support to realise its ASEAN Community Vision 2025. In 2019, aside from the regular Summits with China, Japan, India, the U.S., and the UN, ASEAN held a Commemorative Summit with the ROK to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of ASEAN-ROK Dialogue Relations in November 2019, in Busan.

ASEAN is currently working with several of its Dialogue and external partners to craft Plan of Actions and frameworks for cooperation for the 2021-2025 period. This is to ensure

that momentum and support for ASEAN Community building is sustained, given that the current Plans of Action with these partners are due to end in 2020.

ASEAN also continues to maintain its Centrality in regional affairs by strengthening ASEAN-led mechanisms, including the ASEAN Plus Three (APT), the East Asia Summit (EAS), and ASEAN Plus One frameworks. APT cooperation has been further enhanced through the effective implementation of the APT Work Plan (2018-2022). The EAS continues to be strengthened including through the regular engagement of the EAS Ambassadors in Jakarta and by the implementation of the EAS Plan of Action (2018-2022) to advance practical cooperation, including cooperation in new areas, such as maritime cooperation.



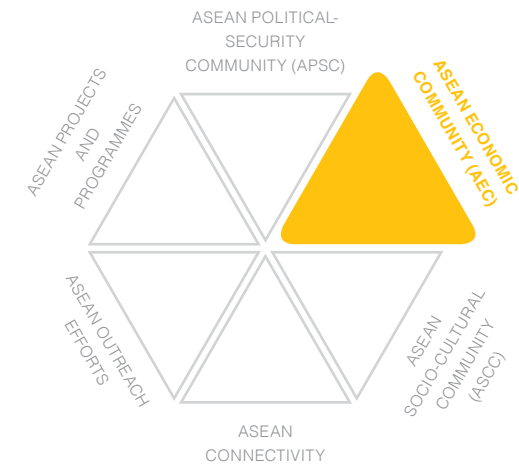
ASEAN has received growing interest from countries and organisations outside the region to forge formal partnerships. In 2019, ASEAN welcomed Chile as a Development Partner, and also saw the accession of Bahrain and Peru to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), which is the primary code governing inter-state relations in the region. Accession of non-ASEAN countries to the TAC reflects their commitment to the tenets of the Treaty and to ASEAN, while simultaneously reinforcing ASEAN's core values.

Relations with the United Nations and regional organisations continue to be strengthened through meetings and concrete activities across all three ASEAN Community Pillars. The Secretary-General of ASEAN was invited to brief the UN Security Council in

January 2020, highlighting the importance of ASEAN in promoting regional peace, security, and prosperity over the last five decades.

As ASEAN substantiates partnerships in support of Community building, the 54 ASEAN Committees in Third Countries and International Organisations (ACTCs) and the 93 Non-ASEAN Ambassadors accredited to ASEAN play instrumental roles in promoting ASEAN's interests as well as connecting ASEAN to the world by forging mutually beneficial relations. ●

ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY



The economies of ASEAN have been faced with unprecedented uncertainties stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. ASEAN economic growth is likely to slow in 2020 after expanding by 4.6 percent in 2019. Preliminary ASEAN statistics also indicate that total merchandise trade in 2019 declined modestly by 1.8 percent year-on-year (yoy) to US\$2.77 trillion while foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows in the same period increased by 4.7 percent yoy to US\$160.7 billion. In addition, continued trade tensions between major trading partners and concerns over debt sustainability are expected to further weigh on the region's growth outlook. Despite these challenges, the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) continues to make good progress.

Recent events, in particular the COVID-19 pandemic, have highlighted the inevitability and imperative of digital transformation. ASEAN's work on the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) has become more urgent. Over the years, there has been a proliferation of 4IR-related initiatives and activities in ASEAN. 2019 saw the complete signing of the ASEAN Agreement on Electronic Commerce, endorsement of the ASEAN

Digital Integration Framework Action Plan (DIFAP) 2019-2025, issuance of the ASEAN Declaration on Industrial Transformation to Industry 4.0, and development of the ASEAN Innovation Roadmap 2019-2025 and Guidelines on Skilled Labour/Professional Services Development in Response to the 4IR. There is also ongoing work to develop the ASEAN Digital Master Plan 2025 and ASEAN Digital Integration Index, among other things. To ensure these efforts are cohesive, and in view of the cross-Sectoral and multi-dimensional aspects of the 4IR, ASEAN is developing a consolidated strategy. Once developed, the 4IR strategy will articulate clearly and holistically ASEAN's agenda and offer direction across the three Pillars of the ASEAN Community in a coordinated manner.

A Highly Integrated and Cohesive Economy

To achieve its vision of a highly integrated and cohesive economy, ASEAN continues to focus on trade facilitation, including simplification of trade and customs procedures, harmonisation of standards, and streamlining of Non-Tariff Measures (NTM). On the



On financial inclusion, the digital financial services self-assessment has been conducted and a guidance note on developing a monitoring and evaluation framework has been developed.

latter, efforts include establishing National Trade Facilitation Committees (NTFC) or similar organisations in each ASEAN Member State (AMS), fostering NTM notifications, addressing the trade-distortive effects of NTM, and enhancing the capacity of NTM in implementing relevant provisions of the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA) and the NTM Guidelines.

A recent key milestone on trade facilitation was the onboarding of all ten AMS on the live exchange of e-ATIGA Form D in the ASEAN Single Window (ASW) environment. The ASEAN Solutions for Investments, Services, and Trade (ASSIST) has been enhanced and expanded to cover trade in services. The ASEAN-Wide Self-Certification (AWSC) Scheme is expected to be rolled out in 2020, while the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS) pilot project is now ongoing. Engagement with the private sector has also been strengthened by the introduction of the e-Platform, which was piloted in March 2020.

Other technical barriers to trade are being eliminated. The Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) on Type Approval for Automotive Products has been endorsed and is aimed to be signed in August 2020. Three more agreements are near conclusion: a revised ASEAN Framework Agreement on MRAs, the MRA on Building and Construction Materials, and the ASEAN Food Safety Regulatory Framework Agreement. Work on digital standards has commenced.

Preparations are underway to implement the ASEAN Trade in Services Agreement, which will enhance services integration in the region. ASEAN continues to

retain its appeal as an investment destination thanks to continued implementation of the ASEAN Comprehensive Investment Agreement. In facilitating the mobility of people, there has been significant progress under the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (AQR) through the endorsement of the Referencing Reports of Malaysia and the Philippines in May 2019, and of Indonesia and Thailand in December 2019 and January 2020, respectively. These reports provide transparent and detailed description of the educational and training systems in these AMS, hence facilitate comparability and transparency among AMS, which will eventually promote the mobility of students and workers in ASEAN.

To support market integration, efforts to increase financial integration, stability, and inclusion continue. Two Qualified ASEAN Banks (QAB) were established in 2019, paving the way for greater market access. On financial inclusion, the digital financial services self-assessment has been conducted and a guidance note on developing a monitoring and evaluation framework has been developed, while the Insurance Sector's development of a framework for an ASEAN micro-insurance product is a step toward bringing financial inclusion to vulnerable Sectors in the region.

On financial stability, there has been progress in strengthening surveillance and operational capabilities, and providing support to the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralisation (CMIM) as an effective regional safety net and a key component of the global financial safety net. On sustainable financing, the recently completed ASEAN Sustainable Financing Report sets out recommendations for the Government and Quasi-Government Sectors in benchmarking against ASEAN Green, Social, and Sustainability Bond Standards. Further, the ASEAN Disaster Risk Financing and Insurance (ADRFI) programme has successfully rolled-out three-year capacity building activities in ASEAN. The Southeast Asia Disaster Risk Insurance Facility (SEADRIF) will collaborate with ADRFI to enhance ASEAN's capacity to manage resilience to disaster and climate risk. The endorsement of the ASEAN Guiding Principles on Local Currency Settlement Cooperation Framework will help encourage intra-ASEAN trade and investment, while the completion of the principles-based ASEAN Payments Policy Framework for Cross-

Border Real-Time Retail Payments and the Implementing Policy Guidelines will pave the way for greater cooperative arrangements, risk management, and consumer protection in the region.

Enhancing ASEAN Competitiveness

The ASEAN Peer Review Guidance Document and the Toolkit for Formulating the National Enforcement Strategies have been developed with the aim of strengthening the competition regimes of AMS. A Trainers' Guide for Market Studies has also been developed, along with a research paper on commonalities and differences in competition legislations in ASEAN, the Online Business Code of Conduct, and the ASEAN Framework of Cross-Border Cooperation for Consumer Protection.

In addition, the ASEAN Capacity Building Roadmap for Consumer Protection 2019-2025 was initiated. To enhance the Intellectual Property (IP) capital of businesses, the *Business Guide to Filing Processes in the ASEAN-Australia and New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (AANZFTA) Parties*, the *Handbook on IP Commercialisation* as well as an online IP for Business Portals have been developed and launched on the ASEAN IP Portal. These outputs will promote innovation and increase the competitiveness of business entities and Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs). Similarly, the 2nd edition of the ASEAN Common Guidelines on Substantive Trademark Examination is also available on the Portal. These Guidelines ensure quality, consistency, and transparency for substantive examination of trademarks in ASEAN. The Baseline Study on Regulatory Management Systems in ASEAN has been completed with support from the Economic Research Institute of ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) and contributes to the promotion of good regulatory practices in the region.

Regional Connectivity and Sectoral Cooperation

Work across different Sectors has advanced. Promoting resilient and secure digital infrastructure is a key objective. The ASEAN Guidelines for Strengthening the Resilience and Repair of Submarine Cables were adopted in October



2019 to expedite repairs with reduced procedural requirements and costs. The endorsed ASEAN Next Generation Universal Service Obligation (USO 2.0) Framework and the guidelines on approaches to implement the USO 2.0 programs will bridge gaps in broadband access across the region by improving supply and demand for internet connectivity involving multiple stakeholders and in a transparent manner. In October 2019, a Guideline on Accountabilities and Responsibilities of E-Marketplace Providers was adopted to provide a reference on e-commerce regulatory principles to foster reliable online business practices and build consumer confidence in e-commerce in ASEAN, especially once the ASEAN Agreement on Electronic Commerce enters into force.

On transport, the Protocol to implement the Eleventh Package of Commitments on Air Transport Services under the ASEAN Framework of Services (AFAS) was signed, further liberalising air transport ancillary

services in the region. ASEAN also continued to enhance aviation safety through the adoption of Implementing Protocol-1: Qualification of Flight Simulation Training Devices (FSTD) under the MRA on Flight Crew Licensing (FCL). Meanwhile, the ASEAN Green Ship Strategy was adopted as part of efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by ships, particularly small vessels that are not governed by international conventions and operate in the territorial waters of individual AMS. ASEAN has also adopted the Implementation Framework of the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Multimodal Transport (AFAMT) and its Action Plan, including key measures to facilitate the use of a single multimodal transport contract for goods carried by different modes of transport.

On tourism, the implementation of ASEAN Tourism Packages 2019-2020 continues with a new focus on ecotourism, sea cruises and cultural festival tourism. In December 2019, the ASEAN Gastronomy Tourism



▲ Economic Ministers and participants line up for a photo session at the ASEAN Economic Ministers - ASEAN Business Advisory Council Consultation.

Master Plan was adopted with the aim to develop new products that leverage the diversified gastronomic cultures of ASEAN. Promoting a high quality and sustainable tourism industry continues to play a crucial role in developing ASEAN tourism. The ASEAN Tourism Professionals Registration System (ATPRS) was revamped and relaunched in January 2020. Based on the ASEAN tourism hotel standards, 46 hotels were awarded accreditation in 2019-2020.

On energy, as of 2019, ASEAN achieved 24.4 percent energy intensity reduction, exceeding the 20 percent target for 2020. ASEAN is pursuing coordinated strategies for energy efficiency for air conditioning and lighting, and is looking at pathfinder efforts to cover other electricity intensive equipment. To date, ASEAN has reached a renewable energy share of 14.3 percent

of its total primary energy supply and 26.8 percent of its installed power capacity. The recent completion of a study assessing the impact of integrating renewables into the ASEAN Power Grid (APG) as well as MOUs between the ASEAN Centre for Energy and universities in Indonesia, Japan, and Thailand support efforts toward ASEAN's renewables target. Further progress was made toward regional power integration by the key recommendations of the recently finalised Feasibility Study on ASEAN Multilateral Power Trade, while the Lao PDR, Malaysia, and Thailand also increased capacity for multilateral power trade to 300 MW. Further development of ASEAN gas and regasification infrastructure continues. A follow-up study on Small-Scale LNG in ASEAN was successfully conducted by the ASEAN Council on Petroleum (ASCOPE).

Implementation of the first phase of the ASEAN Minerals Cooperation Action Plan III (AMCAP) showed good progress, notably in the areas of capacity building and sustainable minerals development. In 2019-2020, in addition to numerous capacity-building activities and initiating interfaces with new partners, a regional Capacity Building Programme for AMCAP was adopted to serve as a rolling work plan and to provide longer term visibility for capacity building in areas prioritised by AMS. The Mid-Term Review of the AMCAP-III Phase 1:2016-2020 was completed, with key recommendations aiming to enhance strategic direction and focus on ASEAN minerals cooperation, including the growing role of minerals and metals in the global low-carbon transition and the digital age. The development of the next phase of the AMCAP III has commenced with this in mind.

On science, technology, and innovation (STI), the ASEAN Innovation Roadmap 2019-2025 was adopted in 2019. Under the ASEAN STI Fund, 27 projects were awarded funding amounting to about US\$ 1 million. Under the ASEAN-India Space Cooperation Programme, 54 collaborative projects and 84 training fellowships were supported under various ASEAN-India Funds. A collaborative project with Russia on industrial waste water treatment technologies was successfully carried out, while a study trip to the Barcelona Supercomputing Centre was supported by E-READI and attended by 15 scientists and experts from ASEAN. The STI Training Programme was rolled out. In addition, Japan initiated a study to investigate the human capital required by future STI policy professionals and leaders. To encourage research in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), and to recognise women in STEM, the annual ASEAN-Korea Award for Excellence in Science & Technology and the annual ASEAN-US Science Prize for Women were organised. Downstream of the innovation ecosystem; innovation summits and commercialisation events, such as ASEAN NEXT 2019, were jointly organised by AMS and Dialogue Partners, with the participation of private sector involvement highly encouraged.

On food, agriculture and forestry, ASEAN remains committed to achieving food security, to enhancing trade, market access, and the competitiveness of

agriculture and forestry products, and to enhancing sustainable forest management. In 2019, ASEAN endorsed various regional policy tools, such as the ASEAN General Guidelines on Halal Food; ASEAN Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Certification Manual-Quality Assurance Systems for ASEAN Fruits and Vegetables; Good Animal Husbandry Practices (GAHP) for Sheep and Goats, Ducks, Beef, and Dairy Cattle; Regional Technical Guidelines on Early Warning System for Aquatic Animal Health Emergencies; ASEAN Guidelines for Detecting and Preventing Wildlife Trafficking; and the ASEAN Voluntary Code of Conduct on Imports for Forest and Timber Companies. ASEAN is now developing the new ASEAN Integrated Food Security (AIFS) Framework and Strategic Plan of Action on Food Security (SPA-FS) for 2021-2025 to ensure long-term food security and nutrition, and to improve the livelihoods of farmers in the region.

Ensuring an Inclusive and People-Centred AEC

An ASEAN action agenda on digitalisation for MSMEs was adopted to promote their participation in the digital economy and more strategic partnerships were developed with private sector and non-governmental entities to support capacity building. The Asia Foundation and Google teamed up with ASEAN to provide training on digital skills and tools for micro enterprises, including women entrepreneurs and youths from underserved regions. The project will also be a mechanism for helping MSMEs to learn about programs or assistance that can help them during the COVID-19 crisis. Such initiatives complement more than 50 courses offered by the ASEAN SME Online Academy on topics such as finance and accounting, marketing and technology, and doing business online. The ASEAN Coordinating Committee on MSME has also actively shared information on measures to counteract the impact of COVID-19 on MSMEs, and is looking to expedite initiatives that will promote easy access to online information and services for MSMEs.

Private sector engagement has increased with greater involvement by business councils with various ASEAN bodies. In addition to the *ASEAN for Business* bimonthly bulletin and *ASEAN Economic Community (AEC)*

Dialogue, which aim to provide easier access to information on developments under AEC, two public-private initiatives, the ASEAN Mentorship for Entrepreneurs Network (AMEN) and the ASEAN Human Empowerment and Development (AHEAD) were developed by the ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ASEAN-BAC) in cooperation with the ASEAN Coordinating Committee on MSME (ACCMSME) and the Government of Thailand. Public-private collaboration is also crucial in scaling up regional responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and this topic was the focus of the 4th AEC Dialogue held in May 2020.

Integrating ASEAN into the Global Economy

Efforts were focused on concluding negotiations for the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). At the 3rd RCEP Summit in November 2019, Leaders from 15 RCEP participating countries (RPC) endorsed the text of the draft RCEP Agreement. All 15 RPCs are now exerting efforts to address and possibly resolve India's significant outstanding issues while at the same time preparing the RCEP Agreement for signing in November 2020, as mandated by ASEAN Leaders.

Notwithstanding the challenges and difficulties brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, ASEAN Member States and their major trading/FTA partners have been working together to ensure that the pandemic does not disrupt the flow of goods within their respective FTAs. Acknowledging that ASEAN's FTAs could potentially play a significant role in post-pandemic recovery, ASEAN and its partners continue to discuss not only upgrading their respective agreements, e.g., the ASEAN-China FTA, ASEAN-Korea FTA, and the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand FTA, but also are looking into other areas of cooperation. It is anticipated that in the aftermath of the pandemic, priority attention will be given to addressing non-tariff barriers and trade facilitation when upgrading ASEAN's FTAs. It should also be noted that the ASEAN-Hong Kong, China FTA is now in force in seven AMS, with a target of entering into force for the remaining AMS within this year.

On potential FTA partners, with the completion of exploratory discussions and trade policy dialogues, officials are now working on next steps and

recommendations for a potential ASEAN-Canada FTA. ASEAN and the European Union (EU) are also continuing discussions on a framework to set the parameters for an ASEAN-EU FTA.

With the COVID-19 outbreak, ASEAN and its neighbouring partners agreed to enhance cooperation and coordination not only to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on the region, but also to strengthen supply chain connectivity to make AMS more resilient and less vulnerable to future shocks. The ASEAN Economic Ministers took the lead with the issuance of the Statement on Strengthening ASEAN's Economic Resilience in Response to the Outbreak of COVID-19 in March 2020, which was soon followed by Joint Statements with a number of partners. Based on the Statements issued and to be issued, concrete action plans toward that end will be developed.

AEC Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms

The AEC 2025 Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework continued to track the progress and outcomes of the implementation of the AEC Blueprint 2025, as well as the status of implementation of the AEC annual priorities. In support of compliance monitoring of AEC commitments, Country Visits to Myanmar and Singapore were conducted in September 2019 and December 2019, respectively.

A key milestone in this reporting period is the commencement of the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the AEC Blueprint 2025, which will look at the progress achieved, evaluate outcomes/impacts, discuss achievements and challenges, and provide recommendations on the Blueprint's implementation. One of Priority Economic Deliverables (PED) under Viet Nam's 2020 Chairmanship is the submission of the preliminary report of MTR of AEC Blueprint 2025 to the AEC Council in November 2020. The final MTR report, both internal and public versions, will be finalised in early 2021 to reflect implementation as of the end of 2020.

The ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC) also continued to prepare regular monitoring and surveillance reports, namely, the ASEAN Investment Surveillance Report for

the ASEAN Economic Ministers-ASEAN Investment Area Council Meeting, the ASEAN Financial Integration Monitoring Report for the ASEAN Finance and Central Bank Deputies Meeting, and the ASEAN Insurance Surveillance Report for the ASEAN Insurance Regulators Meeting.

On public outreach, the *ASEAN Integration Report 2019*, a flagship publication by the ASEAN Integration Monitoring Directorate, was launched in November 2019, with key analysis of the implementation of the AEC Blueprint 2025 over the last four years. In addition, the biannual *ASEAN Economic Integration Brief (AEIB)* was published in June and November 2019, respectively, to inform the public on the progress of AEC.

In April 2020, the inaugural issue of the *ASEAN Policy Brief (APB)* was published. The *APB* is a platform for ASEAN Secretariat staff to share their analysis of emerging and pertinent issues affecting ASEAN integration. The second *APB* discussed the economic impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on ASEAN, a fitting topic given the current situation.

On statistical cooperation, the ASEAN Community Statistical System (ACSS) continued to provide timely, comparable, and reliable statistics. ACSS works to improve the collection and dissemination of international merchandise trade statistics and statistics on international trade in services, foreign direct investment statistics, and a System of National Accounts. In 2020, the ACSS will release the Baseline Report of ASEAN SDG (Sustainable Development Goals) Indicators and launch a data portal to support the collection, processing, and dissemination of ASEAN SDG indicators, key milestones to coincide with the 10th anniversary of the ACSS this year.

The Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI)

A review of IAI Work Plan III (2016-2020) and its monitoring, reporting, and evaluation (MRE) system, which was finalised in October 2019, revealed that the actions outlined for each strategic area (food and agriculture, trade facilitation, MSMEs, education, and health and well-being) in the work plan were useful reference for Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar





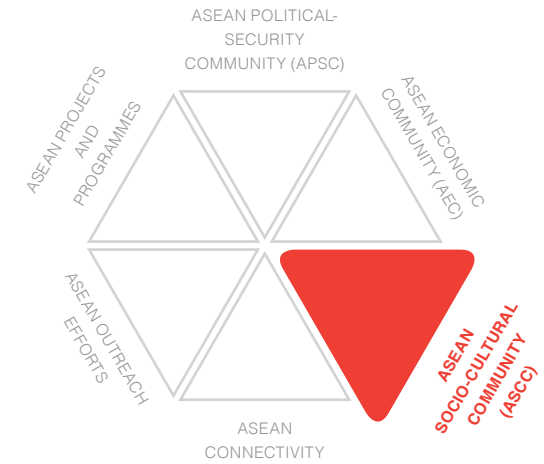
ACSS works to improve the collection and dissemination of international merchandise trade statistics and statistics on international trade in services, foreign direct investment statistics, and a System of National Accounts.

and Viet Nam (CLMV countries) to formulate their respective national plans. Various capacity building programmes were implemented with high participation rates. Between September 2016 and February 2020, a total of 109 projects amounting to US\$28.64 million have been approved under the IAI Work Plan III, addressing 20 out of 26 actions (76.9 percent) in five strategic areas.

Among the projects implemented was the development of financial literacy programmes for growing microenterprises, which highlighted the importance of leveraging the unique strengths of each stakeholder to deliver the programmes effectively. Another notable project is the assessment of legal and regulatory frameworks on e-commerce in CLMV countries, which recognised the increasing efforts by

CLMV Governments to draft and implement legislation in line with regional agreements as well as global practices related to e-commerce. The second phase of the Project identified capacity-building needs to assist CLMV countries in strengthening their legal and regulatory framework to promote e-commerce and protect online consumers. Meanwhile, the Singapore Cooperation Centres in CLMV capitals continued to provide trainings for CLMV officials in various topics. In October 2019, the ASEC welcomed 12 CLMV officials from various Ministries as attachment officers for a one-year period. Thus far, 87 CLMV officials have graduated from the attachment programme at the ASEC, supported by the Government of Japan. ●

ASEAN SOCIO-CULTURAL COMMUNITY



The ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) achieved significant progress during the reporting period in implementing the ASEAN Vision 2025. Increased momentum in project implementation, intensified cross-Sectoral and cross-Pillar collaboration, and closer consultation and engagement with partners, civil society organisations (CSO), and relevant stakeholders are cause for optimism. Of nearly 1,000 projects and activities that address strategic measures in the ASCC Blueprint 2025, 23 percent have been completed, 47 percent are ongoing, and 30 percent remain to be implemented.

ASCC's accomplishments include strengthening human resource development; promoting inclusion, empowerment, and governance; stepping up cooperation on environmental protection and conservation; building resilience and a collective response to disasters; and promoting ASEAN cohesion and identity.

A Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the ASCC Blueprint 2025 is underway to monitor and evaluate implementation. Despite disruptions from the COVID-2019 pandemic, the ASCC's Sectoral Bodies are adapting and innovating

as they strive to deliver on 2016-2020 commitments while preparing work plans for 2021-2025 and looking even further into the future, beyond 2025, to implement the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) by 2030.

Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Acting on reports received by the ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC) in December 2019 from counterparts in China about unexplained clusters of pneumonia in Wuhan, the ASEAN Health Sector immediately activated existing national and regional mechanisms, mobilising to detect, prevent, and respond to the disease that would later be named as COVID-19.

Various mechanisms and platforms were used to fast-track regional responses to the pandemic, including the ASEAN Emergency Operations Centre Network for Public Health Emergencies (ASEAN EOC Network); the ASEAN BioDiaspora Virtual Centre (ABVC); the Regional Public Health Laboratories Network (RPHL); the ASEAN Risk Assessment and Risk



▲ Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic

Communication Centre (ARARC); as well as the ASEAN Health Sector Cooperation platforms and mechanisms at the cluster, Senior Official, and Ministerial levels, among ASEAN Member States (AMS) and ASEAN Plus Three (APT) countries.

Multiple high-level teleconferences between ASEAN Leaders and Health Ministers with the APT and the US were held to enhance cooperation in responding to COVID-19 and to confirm regional commitments to move forward sustainably and mitigate the pandemic's impact. Technical teleconferences were also held between senior ASEAN health officials, experts, and external partners to learn more about COVID-19 to develop an epidemiological timeline, determine the extent of disease transmission, discuss best practices

for clinical management, and to determine control and response strategies.

Additional vital exchanges demonstrated ASEAN's enhanced commitment to share information, knowledge, and expertise in a timely manner, including discussions on operational guidelines, the donation of essential medical supplies and equipment, and resource mobilisation and project development to strengthen regional coordination on pandemic preparedness and response.

Other Sectoral Bodies and ASEAN entities were also mobilised. ASEAN Labour Ministers, by teleconference, exchanged information on national responses to the pandemic. Subsequently, a Joint Statement was adopted, committing to provide assistance to all workers affected



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▲ ▼ Youth across the region participate in the ASEAN Youth Social Journalism Training in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam, 23 September 2019.



by the pandemic. The ASEC and ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) have also been working closely to develop activities to enhance awareness of and advocate for nature-based solutions to prevent future pandemics or the emergence of zoonotic diseases. Additional efforts have been readied by ASCC Sectoral Bodies and ASEC to combat fake news, address the challenges arising from educational disruptions, and mitigate the pandemic's impacts on vulnerable Sectors.

Boosting Human Resources

The ASCC's work on human resources and human capital development in the reporting period is marked by a strong political commitment, a framework of cooperation, and intensified multi-sectoral collaboration. The Bangkok Declaration on Advancing Partnership in Education for 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in ASEAN was adopted by ASEAN Leaders in November 2019. In support of the SDGs, the Declaration aims to advance inclusive, equitable, and high quality education and lifelong learning through multi-stakeholder partnerships.

On technical and vocational education and training (TVET), the recently established ASEAN TVET Council plans to engage vocational education providers, industry players, and governments to improve the quality and labour market orientation of TVET to help prepare our region's workforce to meet the demands of our economies and societies. On higher education, the Ad Hoc Working Group on ASEAN Higher Education Mobility is working to better harmonise regional credit transfer system to facilitate greater student mobility. The ASEAN Youth Sector continued to strengthen participation and fostered future-ready skills through various youth, leadership, and cultural exchange forums and programmes.

To further promote decent work and the social protection of workers in ASEAN, various joint initiatives have been conducted. A regional study on informal employment statistics has been produced and followed by developing informal ASEAN employment statistics that are now publicly available on the ASEANStats portal.

On social protection, regional studies have been conducted on the extension of social security to workers in the informal economy, old-age income security, and managing technology's effects on work, workers, and employment relationships. On migrant workers, ASEAN Member States (AMS) completed self-assessments of their respective implementations of the ASEAN Consensus on Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers. The results will serve as a basis for regional initiatives to implement the Consensus over the next five years. The ASEAN Guideline on the Effective Return and Reintegration of Migrant Workers was developed as a reference document for AMS.

Cognisant of the importance of keeping the people of ASEAN healthy, the ASEAN Health Sector focused on operationalising various political commitments, including those covering vaccine security and self reliance, combating substandard and falsified medicines, establishing the ASEAN Centre of Active Ageing and Innovation, and finalising standard operating procedures for the deployment of emergency medical teams and a work plan to combat anti-microbial resistance.

The Health Sector also strengthened multi-Sectoral and multi-stakeholder engagements to prevent and control non-communicable diseases, developed situational updates on universal health coverage in ASEAN, and strengthened health cooperation with partners through the Rules of Procedure on the Engagement of Entities with the ASEAN Health Sector.

Social Inclusion, Empowerment, and Good Governance

The successful completion of the Senior Officials' Conferences on Gender Mainstreaming for all three ASEAN Pillars by 2019 widened the entry points for gender equality in national and regional policies and programmes. Engaging with Sectoral Bodies in the ASEAN Economic and Political-Security Pillars, the ASEAN Committee on Women created important commitments and inputs for development of the ASEAN Strategic Framework on Gender Mainstreaming and related advocacy activities, such as implementation of the ASEAN Enabling Master Plan 2025: Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Through wider engagement with stakeholders, especially CSOs in its autism network, ASSC is progressively institutionalising inclusion in national and regional policies and programmes, while organisations of persons with disabilities have increased opportunities to engage ASEAN using multiple platforms, including the ASEAN Economic Community and ASEAN Political-Security Community.

ASEAN held a commemorative event in November 2019 marking the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) for ASSC Council Ministers, members of the Senior Officials Committee for the ASSC (SOCA), and children representatives. The children offered recommendations to promote their rights and welfare, based on a flagship study that was launched at the event that was titled “Children in ASEAN: 30 Years of CRC”, which took stock of progress and suggested ways forward for stakeholders.

Separately, the inaugural Regional Forum on Ending Child, Early and Forced Marriage (CEFM) was convened to foster knowledge building, improve policy advocacy, and promote multi-Sectoral understanding and solutions to CEFM. A Mid-Term Review of the Regional Plan of Action on Elimination of Violence Against Children was conducted in 2019 and offered recommendations for AMS on how to better protect children from violence, abuse, and exploitation.

On implementing the SDGs, the ASSC has focused on local contexts, leveraging innovation, tracking progress, strengthening data and statistics, and convening high-level meetings to steer the region forward. The 4th ASEAN-China-UNDP Symposium on SDGs highlighted inclusive innovations to accelerate implementation and eradicate poverty, while ASEAN also convened the inaugural Meeting of National Planning Agencies on Accelerating Implementation of SDGs to coordinate and monitor efforts.

ASEAN adopted the Complementarities Roadmap, a milestone document that will further advance the Complementarities Initiative over 2020-2025 through five key areas of cooperation: poverty eradication, infrastructure and connectivity, sustainable natural resources management, sustainable consumption and production, and improving resilience and capacity building for ASEAN experts and relevant institutions.



▲ Participants take part in a Thai cultural demonstration at the ASEAN Secretariat.

On good governance, the ASEAN Statement on Promotion of Good Governance and Acceleration of an Agile Civil Service in a Digital Economy was signed by the ASEAN Heads of Civil Service in August 2019 to enhance the capacities of AMS Civil Services through, among other things, modernisation. An Inter-Sectoral Dialogue Forum on Public Service Motivation was also organised in November 2019 in Myanmar, led by the ASEAN Cooperation on Civil Service Matters (ACCSM), and was joined by representatives of ASEAN Sectoral Bodies responsible for disaster management, education, environment, health, labour, and women. The ASEAN Guidelines on Public Service Delivery was endorsed by ACCSM in March 2020 as a reference for promoting information access, participatory approaches, responsiveness, accountability, non-discrimination, and inclusive public services.

Protecting the Environment

Aiming to promote sustainable development and reinforce its role as a proactive member of the global community, ASEAN continued to address environmental issues during the reporting period, as evinced by the ASEAN Joint Statement on Climate Change to the UNFCCC

▼ ASEAN encourages inclusivity and welcomes people of all backgrounds in its community-building process.





▲ ▼ ASEAN actively promotes sustainable development and environmental protection.



COP-25 and the ASEAN Joint Statement to the UN Climate Action Summit 2019. ASEAN also submitted the ASEAN Inputs to the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework to the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) for the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP15) to be rescheduled in 2021.

On pollution, ASEAN is developing an ASEAN Regional Action Plan on Marine Debris to operationalise the Bangkok Declaration on Combating Marine Debris in ASEAN Region, while the ASEAN Framework of Action on Marine Debris was adopted in 2019. ASEAN is also implementing initiatives supporting local capacity building and promoting the formulation of national action plans to reduce plastic pollution by AMS. An ASEAN-Norway cooperation project to support local capacity-building for reducing plastic pollution was launched in December 2019, and ASEAN is also conducting a feasibility study on establishing an ASEAN Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform.

For ASEAN Environment Day 2019, ASEAN Ministers presented, for the third time, the ASEAN Eco-schools Awards, while also bestowing the inaugural ASEAN Youth Eco-Champions Awards. ASEAN also designated five protected areas in AMS as ASEAN Heritage Parks (AHP) making for a total of 49 AHPs to date: Hat Chao Mai National Park and Mu Ko Libong Non-Hunting Area (Thailand), Mu Ko Ang Thong National Park (Thailand), Lo Go-Xa Mat National Park (Viet Nam), Ngoc Linh Nature Reserve (Viet Nam), and Htamanthi Wildlife Sanctuary (Myanmar).

The ASEAN Green Initiative (AGI) obtained support from ASEAN Senior Officials on the Environment (ASOEN), demonstrating ASEAN's commitment to regenerating green space, restoring forest ecosystems, and raising awareness about biodiversity and ecosystem services by planting over 10 million trees throughout the ASEAN region for a period of 10 years.

On regional environmental protection and conservation, ASEAN continues to strengthen its partnerships and engage stakeholders, such as by joining the ASEAN-EU High-Level Dialogue on Environment and Climate Change, the ASEAN-Japan Dialogue on Environmental Cooperation and ASEAN Plus Three Senior Officials

Meeting on Environment (SOME), and ASEAN Plus Three Environment Ministers Meeting (EMM). The Ministers in fact commended the endorsement of the Guidelines (by AWGEE and ASOEN), and encouraged ASOEN and its subsidiary bodies, and the ASEAN Secretariat, to make use of the ASEAN Guidelines on Green Meetings as a reference for hosting or organising ASEAN environment meetings.

On transboundary haze, the region experienced increased severe and widespread haze affecting various AMS during the reporting period. A special teleconference was held on 3 April 2020 with Lao PDR, Myanmar and Thailand to discuss the situation in ASEAN's northern sub-region, challenges on the ground, and efforts taken to mitigate and suppress forest fires. AMS committed to expedite the final review of the Roadmap on ASEAN Cooperation toward Transboundary Haze Pollution Control with Means of Implementation. AMS also noted an urgent need to finalise the Establishment Agreement and Host Country Agreement of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Transboundary Haze Pollution Control (ACC THPC) in Indonesia, so the Centre may become fully operationalised to assist AMS in implementing the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution (AATHP).

Significant progress was made on the implementation of the ASEAN Peatland Management Strategy (APMS 2006-2020), with the ASEAN Peatland Programmes entering the implementation phase. The ASEAN-EU Programme on Sustainable Use of Peatland and Haze Mitigation in ASEAN (SUPA), the Measurable Action for Haze-Free Sustainable Land Management in Southeast Asia (MAHFSA) supported by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the GEF-6 Project on Sustainable Management of Peatland Ecosystems in Mekong Countries implemented by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) successfully conducted their inaugural Regional Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting in November 2019 and adopted their 1st Annual Work Plans and Budgets. The final review of APMS was also agreed to be undertaken by the ASEAN Task Force on Peatlands with the support from SUPA.

The Sub-Regional Ministerial Steering Committee on Transboundary Haze Pollution in the Mekong Sub-Region (MSC Mekong) reaffirmed its commitment to implement the Roadmap through implementation of the

Chiang Rai 2017 Plan of Action, and agreed to set a target for hotspots below 50,000 by 2020. The Sub-Regional Ministerial Steering Committee (MSC) on Transboundary Haze Pollution reaffirmed its readiness to provide assistance, such as the deployment of technical resources for emergency firefighting assistance and to collaborate with MSC countries as needed.

Resilient Disaster Responses

To ensure its collective disaster response capability is stronger and faster, both inside and outside the region, ASEAN established two new strategically located Disaster Emergency Logistics System for ASEAN (DELSA) satellite warehouses, in the Philippines and Thailand. Meanwhile, the capacity of the ASEAN Emergency Response and Assessment Team (ASEAN-ERAT) has also been strengthened by broadening its specialisations in civil-military coordination, information management, logistics, and early recovery.

Following the earthquake and tsunami that struck Palu, Indonesia, in 2018, ASEAN launched ASEAN Village, a permanent housing initiative managed by the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre). Supported by Australia, Brunei Darussalam, and the Philippines; the people of Palu were given opportunities to rebuild their lives and enhance their resilience to future disasters. ASEAN Village, with 75 permanent housing units in its first phase, was handed over to the people of Palu on 16 April 2020.

ASEAN has also supported the Government of Myanmar in facilitating repatriation of displaced people in Rakhine State. The ASEC participated in dialogues between the Governments of Myanmar and Bangladesh with displaced communities in Cox's Bazar. Additionally, the Ad-Hoc Support Team of the ASEAN Secretariat (AHAST) was established to support the repatriation of displaced persons and promote sustainable development in Rakhine State. AHAST was tasked to support the ASEAN Secretary-General in leading implementation of the recommendations of the needs assessment and prioritised projects focusing on enhancing reception and transit centre capacity, strengthening information dissemination, and supporting the provision of basic services in Rakhine State.

On relevant dialogues, the 5th ASEAN Strategic Policy Dialogue on Disaster Management (SPDDM), held in August 2019, focused on localising humanitarian response, mainstreaming disaster risk reduction (DRR), and enhancing partnerships for future challenges. Meanwhile, ASEC hosted the ASEAN High-Level Symposium on Disaster Management in February 2020 so Sectoral Bodies and relevant actors could exchange views on disaster management holistically and across several Sectors. The symposium's recommendations are critical for supporting development the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programme 2021-2025.

On drought mitigation, ASEAN convened a series of National Policy Dialogues on Drought in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Viet Nam that shared key findings of the ASEAN-United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) joint study on drought. Participants agreed that development of the ASEAN Declaration on Drought and implementing Plan of Action were needed to strengthen the political commitments from different Sectors to address the impact of drought.

Under the framework of the ASEAN Safe School Initiative (ASSI), ASEAN developed the ASSI Strategic Framework 2021-2025, producing key deliverables, such as a compilation of evidence-based case stories in school safety, videos on standard operating procedures for school disaster-preparedness plans, and multi-hazard research in education continuity, as well as an ASSI website (aseansafeschoolsinitiative.org).

To strengthen social protection systems during disasters, ASEAN developed ASEAN Guidelines on Disaster-Responsive Social Protection, and continued scaling-up its Forecast-Based Financing/Early Warning Early Action approach through the use of climate risk information for disaster resilience.

The Senior Executive Programme on Disaster Management, held in November 2019, continued to serve as a learning platform for mid-level officials of National Disaster Management Organisations (NDMOs). To empower people and strengthen institutions to deal with disasters, the AHA Centre Executive (ACE) Programme Batch 6 conducted a five-month training,



▲ The ASEAN Secretariat holds a briefing on COVID-19 with speakers from the ASEAN Health Sector, WHO Indonesia and the Indonesian Ministry of Health, at the ASEAN Secretariat, Jakarta, 6 February 2020.

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▲ Media and participants attend the launch of the Poll on ASEAN Awareness, at the ASEAN Secretariat, Jakarta, 29 November 2019.



The outbreak of COVID-19 led to a global health crisis that has had a significant impact on every area of life. Its widespread and long-lasting effect on the world's economy, health infrastructure, and tourism has left the world at a standstill. We cannot predict what will come next. As a simple third-year medical student from Thailand, I am stuck in the awkward position of having enough foundational knowledge of medicine, but am yet to receive any hands-on clinical experience with real patients. As a result, my perspective of the COVID-19 crisis is somewhat distorted, since I see it as a global issue that is within reach, yet which seems so far removed from my concern. Nevertheless, its impact within my community has been immense, seeing that not only our daily lives have changed, but the way we socialise, work, and travel. One notable thing I observed in Thailand is the effectiveness of our precautionary measures and the ability to

cope with the outbreak. What I found more interesting was that depending on the cultural and socio-economic influences within society, protective measures that have been developed differ from country to country.

– **Medical Student from Thailand.**



The Ministry of Health needs to be supported adequately. Sufficient and reasonable budget allocations should be made available to prioritise the acquisition of modern technology and the best available medication. Training should also be sustainably funded for all

frontliners to improve preparedness. Standard operating procedures and clinical practice guidelines need to be on par with the best available evidence. The Ministry of Health should also bring about realistic and logical partnerships between the Public and Private Health Sectors. These are commonly called Public-Private Partnerships, or PPPs. PPPs include both public and private health centres and can greatly increase a nation's capacity for healthcare response. A contracting model should be initiated for PPP to happen urgently in times of need. It is highly encouraged for PPPs to be initiated, now more than ever, and sustained to ensure proper deliverance of healthcare.

– **Medical Student from Malaysia.**



with a range of courses and activities in Jakarta, as well as field visits, to prepare 18 ASEAN disaster managers to meet future challenges, in ASEAN and beyond.

ASEAN Cohesion and Identity

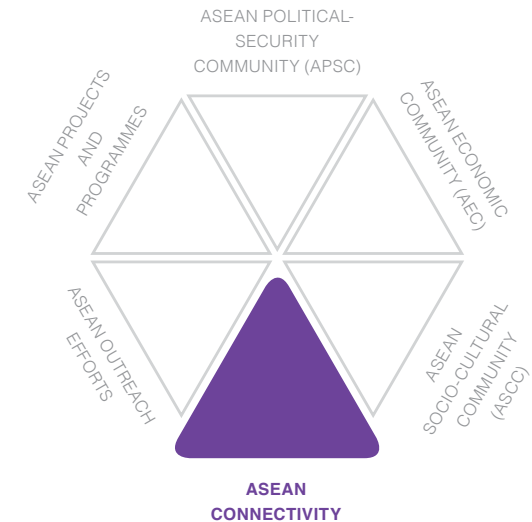
The ASEAN Cultural Year in 2019 was celebrated with the Best of ASEAN Performing Arts: VIVA ASEAN Roadshow in the region, Europe and East Asia. ASEAN leveraged the internet with the launch of the ASEAN Cultural Heritage Digital Archive, where visitors can view regional heritage treasures up close online. To foster ASEAN Identity, the Cultural Sector is spearheading a conversation on developing the Narrative of ASEAN Identity.

To advance the ASEAN Communication Master Plan 2018-2025 (ACMP II), ASEAN launched a Poll on ASEAN Awareness, to provide insights into people's understanding and awareness of ASEAN in the region. The ASEC also launched *The ASEAN*—a magazine aiming to introduce key issues of importance to the peoples of ASEAN, offer insight into ASEAN activities focused on building skills, and develop a sense of community in the region. The magazine features stories on how ASEAN has benefited its peoples. The first issue was released in May and focused on the theme of ASEAN Identity. It also included articles on COVID-19, which will continue to be addressed in upcoming issues.

As 2020 has been designated as the Year of ASEAN Identity, a logo design competition was launched, attracting over 1,300 entries from young people in the region. Approximately 1,200 university students across ASEAN participated in a study on ASEAN Awareness, Values, and Identity as part of the second phase of the ASEAN Youth Development Index. The study will eventually guide interventions to involve youth in ASEAN Community building.

Sports contributes to promoting ASEAN identity and cohesion. In collaboration the Government of Norway and Right to Play, the ASEAN Youth Sports for Development, Peace, and Leadership Initiative was developed. Through the Initiative, ASEAN youth are empowered to initiate community sports projects and advocate for social inclusion, healthy lifestyles, and youth crime prevention. ASEAN Leaders also witnessed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between ASEAN and the International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) in November 2019 to leverage the potential of football in bringing together the people of ASEAN, promote healthy lifestyles, and foster the values of sportsmanship in the ASEAN Community building process. ●

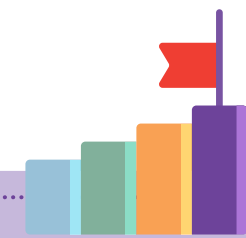
ASEAN CONNECTIVITY



Overview

Our commitment toward a seamlessly integrated ASEAN remains as strong as ever. In this unprecedented time, the COVID-19 pandemic has had negative effects on the well-being of ASEAN's peoples and significant socio-economic impact on everyone's day-to-day lives. ASEAN will stay the course in enhancing regional connectivity, taking into account the emerging new normal.

MPAC 2025 has recorded significant progress and achievements across five strategic areas: sustainable infrastructure, digital innovation, seamless logistics, regulatory excellence and people mobility. Most of the 15 initiatives of MPAC 2025 are in their first phase of implementation and are on track to realise enhanced regional connectivity to ASEAN's peoples. The ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC), National Coordinators, National Focal Points, Lead Implementing Bodies, and relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies will continue to work together to facilitate the implementation of the MPAC 2025, building on the progress and achievements thus far to build a more competitive, resilient and connected ASEAN.



ASEAN CONNECTIVITY IN 2019-2020

- Announcement of the Initial Pipeline of ASEAN Infrastructure Projects
- Development of the Framework for Improving ASEAN Infrastructure Productivity
- Accelerating the Implementation of the ASEAN Sustainable Urbanisation Strategy (ASUS)
- Development of the ASEAN Database on Priority Trade Routes and Framework for Enhancing Supply Chain Connectivity
- Development of the ASEAN-Republic of Korea (ROK) Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Mobility Programme
- Study on Enhancing Intra-ASEAN University Student Mobility



▲ The ASEAN Sustainable Urbanisation Strategy (ASUS) Socialisation Forum convenes a platform to discuss priority ASUS sub-areas and actions.

Connectivity for a Competitive, Responsive and Resilient Region

At the 24th ASEAN Coordinating Council (ACC) Meeting in November 2019, ASEAN announced an Initial Pipeline of ASEAN Infrastructure Projects comprising 19 priority projects across the Digital, Energy, and Transport Sectors worth an estimated US\$15 billion. To improve access and increase connectivity in and among ASEAN Member States, the Pipeline will help ASEAN Member States (AMS) assess, prioritise and mobilise resources for infrastructure projects.

Enhancing bankability is essential to bring these projects into reality. Efforts are ongoing for continued engagement between project owners, multilateral development banks, investors, financiers, and other

infrastructure solution providers. The 10th ASEAN Connectivity Symposium held in Bangkok, Thailand in August 2019, had the theme of Connecting ASEAN through Financing Sustainable Infrastructure. A Project Discussion Webinar for the Yangon-Mandalay Expressway was held on 14 May 2020, offering a useful platform between the project owner, experts, and private sector representatives to better scope their projects. Complementing these efforts, ASEAN is finalising the Framework for Improving ASEAN Infrastructure Productivity, intending to strengthen the capacity of AMS in infrastructure planning, delivery, and operation.

Sustainable infrastructure goes hand-in-hand with the efforts to strengthen cooperation in logistics. In a cross-Sectoral effort, ASEAN is aiming to establish an ASEAN

Database on Priority Trade Routes and Framework for Supply Chain Efficiency by the end of 2020 to address the bottlenecks and develop trade routes to strengthen ASEAN's supply chain network. This endeavour is timely, given the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and will identify opportunities along ASEAN priority trade routes and supply chain networks.

Sustainable Cities and Strengthening Human Capital

Following the launch of the ASEAN Sustainable Urbanisation Strategy (ASUS) in 2018, ASEAN convened socialisation forums in Jakarta in November 2019 and February 2020 to improve stakeholder understanding of the scope and importance of ASUS and its toolkits. In early 2020, ASEAN started a project on Accelerating

the Implementation of ASUS with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) to provide participating cities across ASEAN technical support to develop high-quality project proposals.

Investments in human capital complement and reinforce the efforts in sustainable infrastructure. The ASEAN-ROK TVET Mobility Programme, commenced in January 2020, aims to support AMS in strengthening the provision of technical and vocational skills by facilitating mobility programmes for students and TVET personnel in priority Sectors. Consultations with private sector, industry, and other stakeholders will be undertaken to ensure creation of a workforce that is responsive to market needs and takes into account the impact of COVID-19.

On higher education, ASEAN will finalise the Study on Enhancing Intra-ASEAN University Student Mobility in July 2020, including recommendations for policymakers aimed at fostering intra-ASEAN student mobility—in particular, ensuring the availability of robust ASEAN student mobility data, facilitating the provision of student visas in ASEAN, and assessing the potential for an ASEAN single-branded scholarship.

Toward ASEAN Connectivity Vision 2025

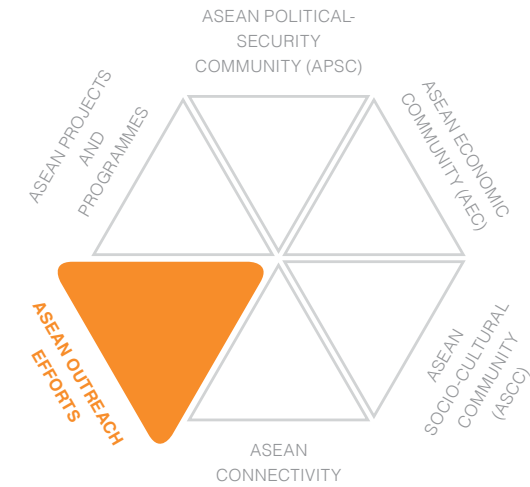
To ensure the achievement of ASEAN Connectivity Vision 2025, the ACCC is undertaking the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of MPAC 2025 in April 2020, as one of the priorities under Viet Nam's 2020 ACCC Chairmanship. It will assess progress, review relevance, identify bottlenecks, and make recommendations to strengthen implementation at both regional and national levels. The MTR of MPAC 2025 complements the MTRs of the ASEAN Economic Community, ASEAN Political-Security Community, and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprints as well as Implementation Review of Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan III.

The ACCC continues to raise awareness and promote the value of ASEAN Connectivity through the ASEAN Connectivity microsite to different stakeholders. ASEAN engages stakeholders and builds partnerships on Connectivity within and beyond the region to create a meaningful impact to the peoples of ASEAN. ●

ASEAN OUTREACH EFFORTS



▲ President Joko Widodo of Indonesia inaugurates the new ASEAN Secretariat Building together with Foreign Ministers of ASEAN and other officials at the 52nd ASEAN Anniversary ceremony, ASEAN Secretariat, 8 August 2019.



ASEAN's 52nd Anniversary

Every ASEAN Day is a jubilee and an opportunity to celebrate ASEAN's founding—an event that transformed the region's socio-political landscape. It is also a time to reflect on ASEAN's journey to ensure peace and prosperity for the region and how ASEAN might better the lives of the nearly 650 million people in the region.

In this spirit, representatives of ASEAN Member States (AMS), the ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC), ASEAN entities, the private sector, social enterprises and other stakeholders joined forces to celebrate the 52nd anniversary of ASEAN. The celebration marked a new chapter in the organisation's history with the inauguration of the new ASEC building.

The President of Indonesia, Joko Widodo, officiated the new building in the presence of Secretary-General of ASEAN Dato Lim Jock Hoi, ASEAN Foreign Ministers, representatives of AMS, and more than 600 guests. Former ASEAN Secretaries-General Tan Sri Dato Ajit Singh and Ambassador Le Luong Minh were also present.

The anniversary featured performances from C-ASEAN Consonant—an ensemble of ten musicians from each AMS who played indigenous musical instruments, and the London School Beyond Academy (LSBA), whose band members are persons with special needs.

Highlights included the placement of the aspirations of ASEAN Leaders for ASEAN's next 25 years in a time capsule by the ASEAN Foreign Ministers and the signing of Memorandum of Understanding between the ASEAN Foundation and Maybank Foundation. This MOU signifies a three-year partnership commitment for "eMpowering Youth Across ASEAN" programme, worth US\$3 million.

A symposium, titled "What Can ASEAN Do More to Support Persons with Disabilities?", was also held, featuring Erlinda Koe, the inaugural recipient of the ASEAN Prize.

Other partners that also took part were representatives of the ASEAN Foundation, ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly, ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation, Bank Mandiri, Bank Central Asia,

Bank DKI, Jakarta Metro Mass Rapid Transit, Pos Indonesia, London School of Public Relations, Maybank Foundation, Indonesian Women's Football Team, and the Indonesian Scouts Association.

Media

Inaugurated in 2017, the ASEAN Media Forum (AMF) has become an effective annual programme to enhance relations with the region's senior editors while boosting coverage of ASEAN. According to the ASEAN Communication Master Plan (ACMP) II, which was launched in 2018, traditional media, including print, TV, and radio, are still important in many AMS.

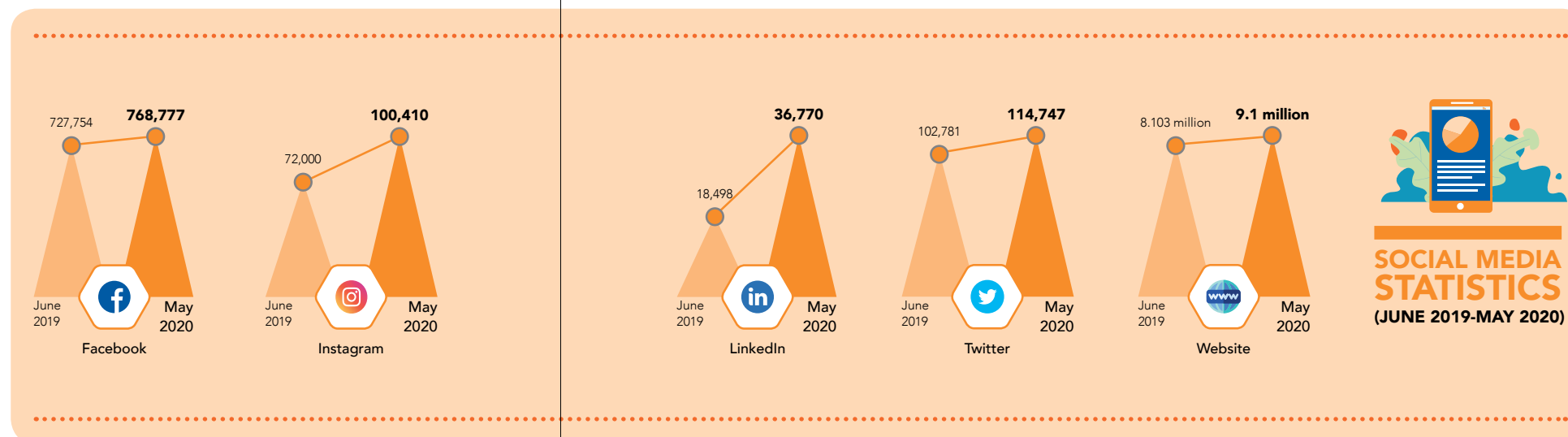
ASEC continued to leverage the success of the programme, convening the 3rd AMF in Bangkok, Thailand, on 29 July 2019. It brought together 25 senior media leaders and prominent bloggers from the region to dialogue with thought leaders on vital economic issues affecting ASEAN. The programme underscored the partnership between ASEC; Germany, its Development Partner; and AirAsia and the Foundation for Public Policy and Good Governance from the private sector. Preparations are underway for the 4th Media Forum to be held in Viet Nam later this year.

Cognisant of the influential role that editors play in shaping the ASEAN narrative, the ASEAN Secretary-General hosted an informal breakfast meeting with Jakarta-based media to strengthen media relations.

The Community Affairs Directorate, as the communication outreach arm of ASEC, initiated and facilitated the drafting of an ASEC Crisis Communication Strategy, to uphold the reputation and credibility of ASEAN, in anticipation of crisis situations.

Social Media

Since the internet and social media are the preferred sources of information for ASEAN citizens, in particular younger citizens, ASEC continues to intensify social media efforts to convey its messages while enhancing engagement online.



In the reporting period, the number of followers of ASEAN's digital and social media platforms has grown significantly. There are currently 1,020,704 subscribers on all of ASEAN's social media platforms, up 11 percent from 2019. Notably, the number of ASEAN's followers on LinkedIn doubled, while ASEAN on Instagram saw an increase in followers of over 50 percent. The number of visits to the ASEAN website grew from 8 million last year to 9.1 million this year.

Moving forward, ASEC will take advantage of digital connections and enhance engagement through live reporting of our events and activities via Facebook Live, YouTube Live, or Instagram Stories, when appropriate.

Outreach

To strengthen relations with young people, ASEC continues to enhance its outreach programmes. In the past year, ASEC welcomed over 4,630 visitors from about 100 institutions, including students, teachers, professors, researchers, and diplomats, while reaching out to another 2,137 students during site visits to academic institutions around Indonesia.

Traditional dancers perform at the ASEAN Music Corner in the ASEAN MRT station, Jakarta.





▲ Dr. Jemilah Mahmood receives the ASEAN Prize trophy for her outstanding humanitarian contribution to the region.

▼ Participants gather at the ASEAN Artist Residency discussion.



On the sidelines of the 16th China-ASEAN Expo in Nanning, China, in September 2019, ASEC collaborated with Guangxi Arts University for an “ASEAN Goes to School” event. Over 200 students from various departments attended the event which aimed to increase awareness, knowledge, and understanding about ASEAN and ASEAN-China relations.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has inevitably reduced outreach opportunities, ASEC has started engaging with partners through teleconferences and webinars and has been strengthening its social media efforts to promote the work of ASEAN.

At the invitation of organisers, ASEC is slated to participate in World Expo 2020 in Dubai, UAE, to raise awareness of ASEAN at a global level. The prestigious event, held every five years, has been rescheduled to October 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. ASEC is currently collaborating with relevant ASEAN centres and entities to prepare content for the ASEAN Pavilion.

Entities Engagement

The Forum of Entities has become a flagship programme to enhance collaboration between entities and various ASEAN agencies and Sectoral Bodies to consolidate ASEAN Community building efforts. Preparations are currently underway for the 4th Forum of Entities, slated for the second half of 2020. The Forum will focus on a Mid-Term Review of ASEAN Vision 2025 to offer entities a chance to contribute to the review and shape the direction of implementation for the vision’s second phase. As of May 2020, there are 73 entities associated with ASEAN listed in Annex 2 of the ASEAN Charter.

ASEAN Studies Dialogue

Guided by the ASEAN Vision 2025, which calls for enhanced cooperation among ASEAN Studies Centres in AMS, ASEC held its inaugural ASEAN Studies Dialogue in November 2019. The Dialogue mapped out a framework for possible cooperation within academia in ASEAN for discussion and to brainstorm a vision and Terms of Reference with the eventual aim of launching an ASEAN Studies Network.

ASEAN Prize

Following the launch of the inaugural ASEAN Prize in 2018, the 2019 ASEAN Prize honoured humanitarian leader Dr. Jemilah Mahmood from Malaysia for her commendable contributions to community-building efforts in the region. The Prime Minister of Thailand, General Prayut Chan-o-cha, and ASEAN Secretary-General Dato Lim Jock Hoi presented the award to Dr. Jemilah in the presence of ASEAN Leaders at the Opening Ceremony of the 35th ASEAN Summit in November 2019 in Bangkok, Thailand. The ASEAN Prize has gained credibility, as evinced by the robust set of applications received in 2019. The call for ASEAN Prize 2020 nominations started in April 2020. The award ceremony is scheduled to be held at the 37th ASEAN Summit in November 2020 in Ha Noi, Viet Nam.

ASEAN Artist Residency Programme

To promote an appreciation of the diversity of ASEAN’s arts and culture and to instill a sense of ASEAN pride and identity, ASEC launched the ASEAN Artist Residency Programme (AARP) in July 2019. The inaugural resident artist, Pannaphan Yodmamee from Thailand, produced an artwork to open the “Shifting Tides” exhibition during the inauguration of the new ASEC Building in August 2019. Her artwork is now on display at the ASEAN Gallery. Moving forward, ASEC will continue to work with the private sector to host artists from Cambodia, Myanmar and Viet Nam under the AARP with the aim to discover young and emerging artist talents in the region and to offer opportunities for ASEAN’s artist communities to embark on cultural and art exchanges. ●

▼ Indonesian elementary students examine an artifact exhibited at the ASEAN Gallery.

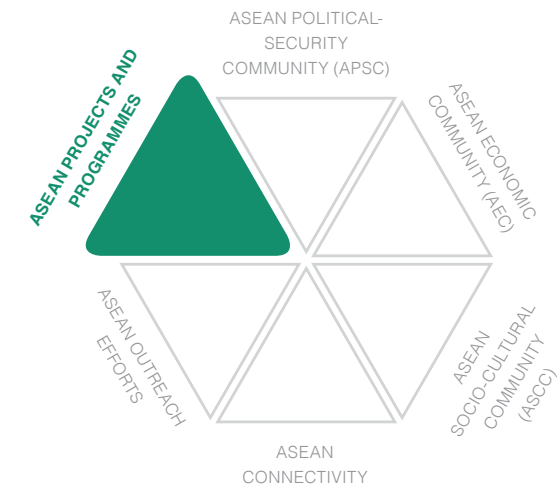




ASEAN PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES



▲ ASEAN Secretariat staff discuss findings at a communications workshop, at the ASEAN Secretariat, Jakarta, 28 February 2020.



As of February 2020, the cumulative value of ASEAN's cooperative projects and programmes submitted since 2009 totaled US\$1,512,726,041, of which US\$1,472,364,077 was utilised (ongoing, implemented, or completed) and US\$40,361,964 was in process.

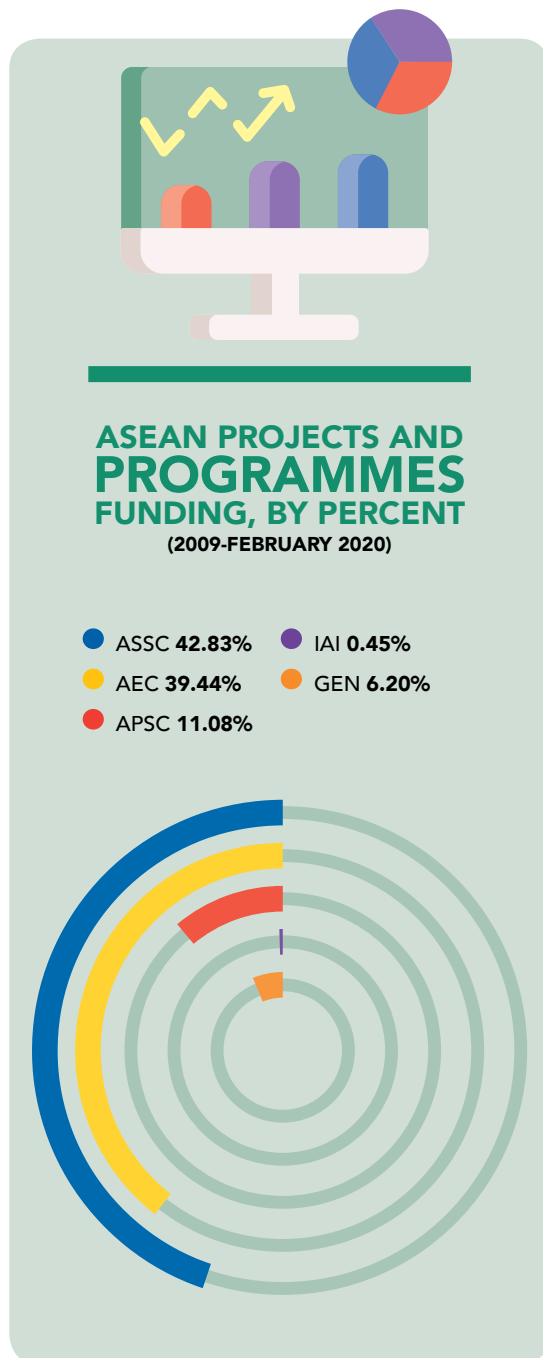
Ongoing, Implemented, or Completed Projects

The utilised portion comprises 1,111 projects (US\$697,308,542) and 104 programmes (US\$775,055,535), itemised as follows:

- The ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC), comprising 42.83 percent (US\$630,585,290) of total expenditures on projects and programmes, funded initiatives on capacity development, disaster management, education, environment, labour migration, and youth exchanges, among other things.
- The ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), comprising 39.44 percent (US\$580,742,822), funded initiatives on climate change and energy, cyber security, food

and agriculture, information and communications, science and technology, and transportation, among other things.

- The ASEAN Political-Security Community (ASPC), comprising 11.08 percent (US\$163,128,821), funded initiatives on combatting crime, cyber capacity development, development cooperation, disaster relief exercises, and human rights, among other things.
- The Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) and Narrowing the Development Gap (NDG), comprising 0.45 percent (US\$6,594,766), funded attachment programmes for Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Viet Nam (CLMV) and capacity building programmes for CLMV on electronic commerce, science and technology and micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME), among other things.
- General and Cross Pillar projects, comprising 6.20 percent (US\$91,312,378), funded initiatives like ASEAN promotional activities, the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025, ASEAN project development trainings, and strengthening the ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC).



Implementation of ASEAN's projects and initiatives was made possible with financial and technical support from ASEAN Dialogue Partners, including Canada, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, ROK, and Russia, and Sectoral Dialogue Partners, including Norway, Pakistan, and Switzerland. Implementation of programmes was mainly supported by ASEAN Dialogue Partners, including Australia, European Union (EU), U.S., and ASEAN Development Partners, including Germany.

Approved for Implementation

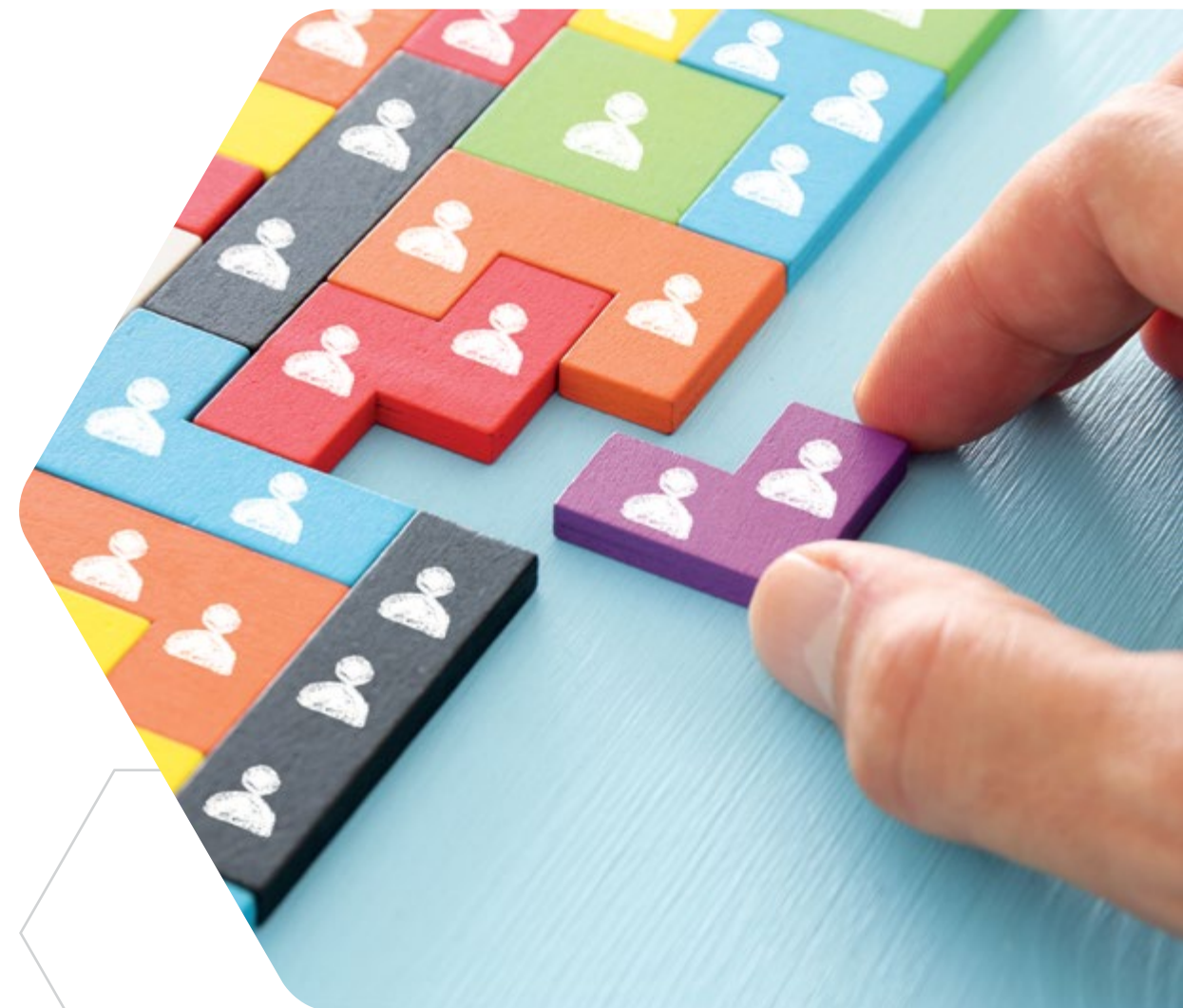
In 2019, 95 ASEAN cooperation projects were approved for implementation, implemented or completed with a total utilised value of US\$62,481,029, itemised as follows:

- ASSC, comprising 75.49 percent (US\$47,166,913), to support projects including disaster management, environment and culture, higher education scholarships, technical and vocational education and training (TVET), and youth exchange programmes, among other things.
- AEC, comprising 11.33 percent (US\$7,081,945), to support initiatives on conformity assessment of products and services, energy efficiency, food and agriculture, and smart city networks, among other things.
- APSC, comprising 10.79 percent (US\$6,739,787), to support initiatives on ASEAN project development trainings, cyber capacity development, development cooperation, and human rights initiatives, among other things.
- IAI/NDG at 2.39 percent (US\$1,492,383) which supported attachment programmes and capacity building of CLMV in various fields, among other things.

Processed and Signed

Programmes processed and signed by the ASEC in 2019 include 10 ASEAN-Germany cooperation programmes with a total value of US\$34,367,843, that were implemented in 2019, itemised as follows:

AEC, comprising 78.51 percent (US\$26,982,835), for programmes including consumer protection, climate-smart land use, promoting competitiveness in the IAI



In 2019, 95 ASEAN cooperation projects were approved for implementation, implemented or completed with a total utilised value of US\$62,481,029.



framework, promoting small and medium enterprises, promoting sustainable agri-food systems, promoting sustainable mobility for metropolitan regions, and strengthening quality infrastructure and sustainable agricultural value chains, among other things.

ASCC, comprising 12.83 percent (US\$4,408,960), covering sustainable use of peatlands and transboundary haze, among other things.

General projects, comprising 8.66 percent (US\$2,976,048), covering support of ASEAN Secretariat capacity building, among other things.

Additional supported ongoing programmes include the Australian-funded ASEAN-Australia Development Cooperation Program (AADCP) Phase II, the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area AANZFTA, supported by Australia and New Zealand; the EU-funded E-READI and ARISE Plus programmes, and the US-supported PROSPECT and IGNITE programmes. ●



ASEAN: A Community of Opportunities for All



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