

ASEAN YOUTH STATEMENT 2020
ASEAN Youth Interface with ASEAN Leaders and related events
(ASEAN Summit 36)

Excellencies,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,
Fellow participants,

We, 20 youths representing nearly 220 million ASEAN youth, would like to take this opportunity to express our profound gratitude to ASEAN Leaders for allowing us to speak out the voice of ASEAN youth.

We are delighted to see the time and efforts of ASEAN leaders have put into nourishment and development of young people in the recent years. They have enabled young people to involve more deeply in activities, to be a part of cooperation mechanisms, dialogues and policy making processes in the ASEAN region, in terms of both quantity and quality, giving young people the opportunity to speak out, be equipped with the skills to develop and unleash their talents in several platforms that connect young people with ASEAN community development.

Following the theme of the ASEAN Chairmanship 2020 “Cohesive and Responsive”, in the past few days, we have been gathering and discussing the most important and practical issues, which we believe they are the most concern topics for ASEAN youth and also ASEAN leaders, namely: **Youth volunteerism, Youth Entrepreneurship and 4th Industrial Revolution skills for youth.**

Youth Volunteerism

Volunteerism is an asset and one of the most valuable qualities of ASEAN youth. Youth volunteerism has been playing a pivotal role and one of the signatures in ASEAN youth. ASEAN member countries have paid much attention to volunteerism, volunteer work and community activities, as shown in Sub-goal 4 in the ASEAN Youth Work Plan period 2016-2020 “Strengthen youth involvement and participation in building an ASEAN community through volunteerism opportunities and leadership programmes”. In recent years, ASEAN youth has organized several meaningful volunteer activities putting a great amount of

knowledge and innovation, which helps sow the seed of kindness and encourage ASEAN people to actively involve. Volunteerism is a bridge between youth and youth organisations forming a mighty volunteer community and growing in terms of quantity and quality. It is a professional and diverse community and is highly regarded by the international community.

Therefore, to nurture the youth's potential to flourish and effectively participate in volunteer activities, we would like to propose ASEAN leaders:

1. Support the creation of enabling environments for volunteerism by building mechanisms, participation, involvement and implementing in the policies making procedure to effectively support the participation of young people in volunteer activities.

2. Provide regular platforms and inclusive mechanism to recognize the outstanding achievements of youth – both as individuals and organisations – in promoting volunteer initiatives considered impactful for the society; and

3. Support ASEAN youth to establish an ASEAN youth volunteer network/community in various scales to provide opportunities for the exchange of ideas and sharing of experiences through volunteer activities.

Youth Entrepreneurship

Youth Entrepreneurship has been enhancing in today's world in the process of economic prosperity. We strongly believe that the entrepreneurial spirit and lessons from start-up journeys should not just be limited and understood in a specific group of people but be encouraged widely among young people, especially ASEAN youth. To nurture innovative start-ups, there are four things we should emphasize on and we would recommend to ASEAN leaders:

1. To focus on improving the evidence-based youth employment policies and support framework for starting and running businesses in ASEAN countries that can enable ASEAN entrepreneurs to expand regionally more easily. Support framework can include areas such as legal support in starting a business, access to investors and co-matching with local partners and labour pool.

2. To strengthen continuous dialogue between ASEAN ministers, leaders, high-level officials and ASEAN youth in the form of face-to-face meetings or conferences to timely tackle the issues and difficulties that ASEAN youth frequently encounter during their start-up journey.

3. To build a mechanism and design an up-to-date curriculum to equip young people with knowledge of laws, business administration and entrepreneurship skills in the earlier stage in school.

4. To focus on investing and building infrastructures, creating favourable mechanisms for organizations operating in the entrepreneur ecosystems such as youth support centres, co-working space and startups incubators.

4th Industrial Revolution Skills for Youth

The Fourth Industrial Revolution is increasingly influential in every aspect of life and generally has a strong impact on the future of work. The ASEAN youth, is indeed a strong force of the ASEAN population, which will play a key role in leading the post Covid-19 recovery and also being the most strongly affected by the 4th Industrial Revolution.

With intelligence, determination and enthusiasm, ASEAN youth are committed to proactively adapt, innovate and make the most use of our knowledge and skills to take the lead of technology and overcome these challenges.

Realising it is our responsibility to advance and recover as one, we, therefore, pledge to advocate and raise awareness on the importance of:

1. Investing and building relevant future ready education system of all forms, including life-long learning so that the ASEAN youth can master knowledge, maximize their skills and take initiative in the Fourth Industrial Revolution; and to develop adaption abilities and resilience to various disruption including COVID-19 crisis.

2. Focusing more on infrastructure investment; therefore we should improve the quality of the system of vocational training and skills-training schools. It is our responsibility to shift the emphasis on skills-training to make it universal in the entire education system, helping ASEAN youth to develop in an all-round way, which means both in life and in career thereby assisting other young people adapt to new job requirements and challenges in the 4th Industrial Revolution , including for vulnerable youth groups.

Without the support of and combined efforts of ASEAN leaders, we will not achieve our targets. We pledge that ASEAN youth will build a strong network, participate with responsibility in an active way to maximize the effectiveness of volunteer activities, entrepreneurship and activities that relate to essential skills

to adapt in the fourth industrial revolution. This will actively contribute towards the sustainability of every ASEAN member states and the whole ASEAN region.

Once again, on behalf of the ASEAN youth, we would like to extend our sincerest and deepest gratitude to ASEAN leaders for listening. May good health always be with you! We wish Summit 36 to harvest fruitful results.

Thank you so much!