

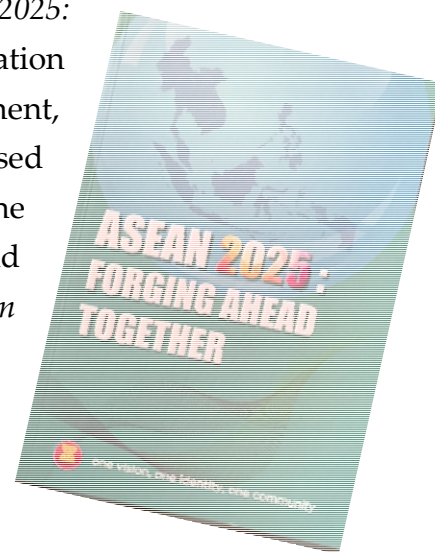
# Assessing the Progress of Implementation: A Mid-Term Review of the APSC Blueprint 2025\*

## Introduction

As tasked by the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) Council in November 2019, the ASEAN Coordinating Conference for Political-Security Community (ASCCO), when it convened on 1 September 2020, undertook the Mid-Term Review of the *APSC Blueprint 2025*. The review exercise is likewise stipulated in the *APSC Blueprint 2025*, which states that progress of implementation shall be reviewed mid-way into the Blueprint's term, in addition to the annual and biennial reviews undertaken.

## The APSC Blueprint 2025 in Perspective

The APSC Blueprint is an integral part of the *ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together*, the document guiding ASEAN integration and community building efforts from 2016 to 2025. This document, adopted by the ASEAN Leaders in November 2015, is composed of the "Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the Establishment of the ASEAN Community", the *ASEAN Community Vision 2025* and the three Community Blueprints. Subsequently, the *Master Plan for ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025* and the *Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan 3*, which were both adopted the following year, were included as part of the *ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together*.




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\* Prepared by the Analysis and Monitoring Division (AMD), ASEAN Political-Security Community Department (APSCD), The ASEAN Secretariat.

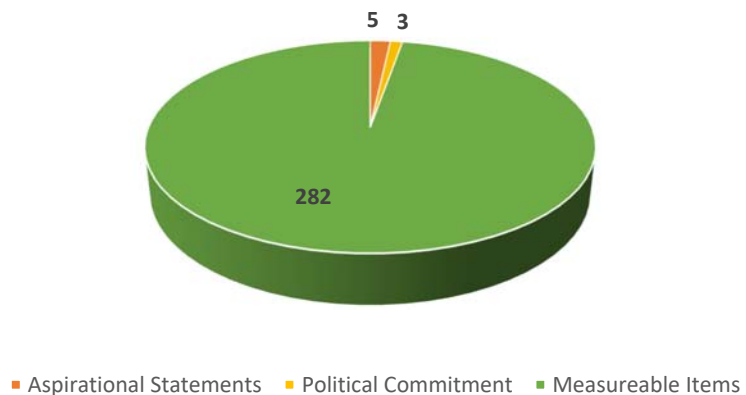
Inputs from ASEAN Member States (AMS) received prior to the 21<sup>st</sup> APSC Council Meeting have been incorporated. Guidance from the 21<sup>st</sup> APSC Council Meeting has been factored in. Relevant inputs from the APSC Sectoral Bodies, AMS, and Entities Associated with ASEAN during the 12<sup>th</sup> Coordinating Conference for the ASEAN Political-Security Community (12<sup>th</sup> ASCCO) have been taken into consideration. Further inputs from AMS prior to the 22<sup>nd</sup> APSC Council Meeting have been included.



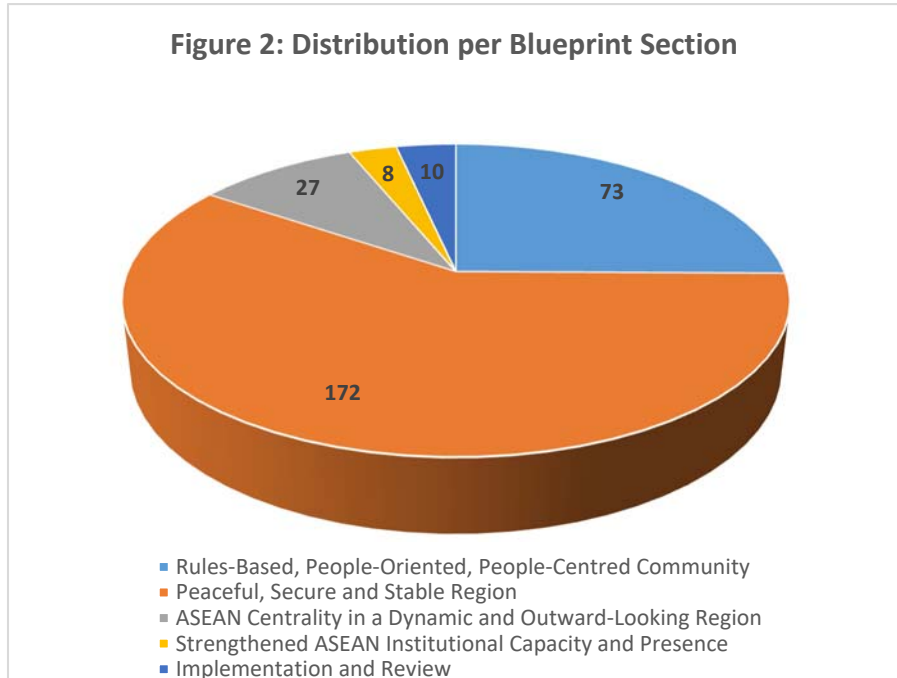
The *APSC Blueprint 2025*, therefore, provides the roadmap in ASEAN's journey towards what is envisioned to be a political security community, one of the three pillars of the ASEAN Community. As stated in the Blueprint, the goal is for "peoples and members of ASEAN living in peace with one another and the world at large in a just, democratic and harmonious environment".

The Blueprint is composed of five sections namely (1) rules-based, people-oriented, people-centred community; (2) peaceful, secure and stable region; (3) ASEAN Centrality in a dynamic and outward-looking region; (4) strengthened ASEAN institutional capacity and presence; and (5) implementation and review. As the Blueprint for the political security community, its action lines, totaling to 290, can be categorised into (i) *aspirational statements*, (ii) *political commitments* and (iii) *measurable items*, with the latest comprising most of the action lines. The five aspirational statements (**Annex A**) are found under the section *Rules-Based, People-Oriented, People-Centred Community* while the three political commitments are found under the section *Peaceful, Secure and Stable Region* (**Annex B**).

**Figure 1: Typology of Blueprint Action Lines**

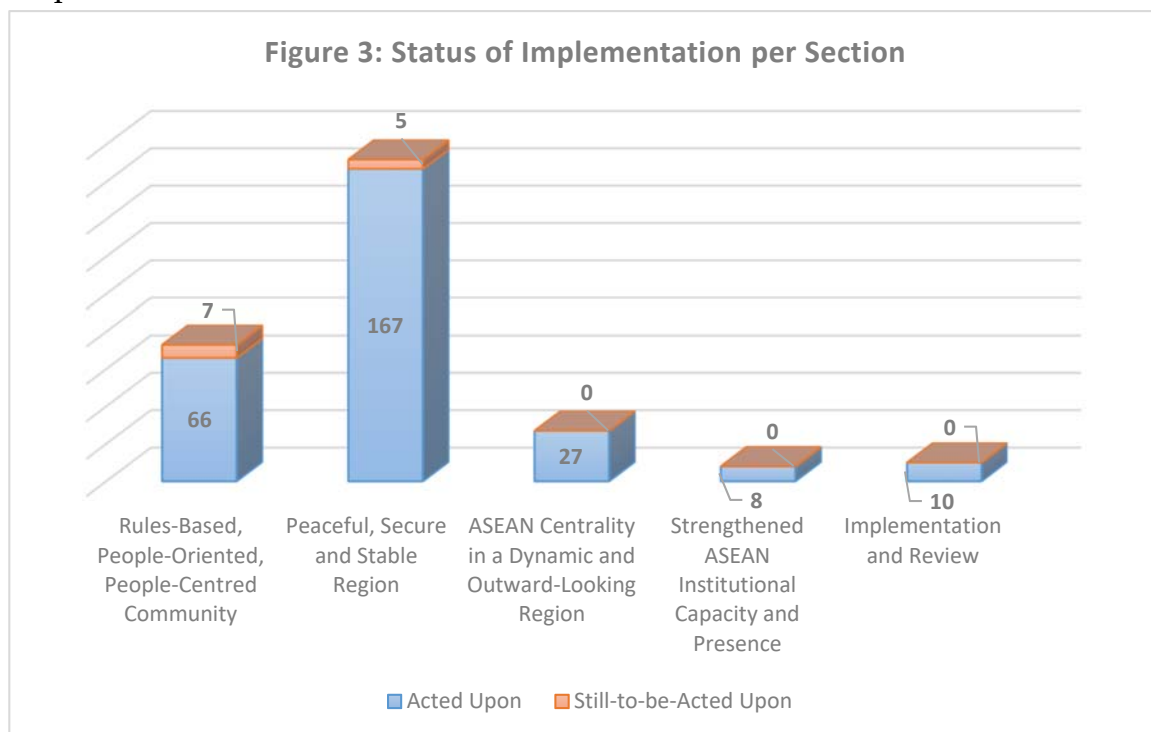


The 290 action lines of the Blueprint are distributed as shown in the Figure 2, with the section: *Peaceful, Secure and Stable Region* having the most number of action lines (172 in total) and the section: *Strengthened ASEAN Institutional Capacity and Presence* having the least number (8).



### Status of Implementation

As of September 2020, the implementation of the Blueprint is progressing well, with 96% (278) of the action lines already acted upon, and only 12 action lines still to be acted upon.



These remaining action lines are found in the sections: *Rules-Based, People-Oriented, People-Centred Community* and *Peaceful, Secure and Stable Region*, and are listed in **Annex C**.

As guided by the 21<sup>st</sup> APSC Council held in June 2020, the twelve (12) action lines that are still to be acted upon have been examined and benchmarked to determine whether they are action lines that had been carried over from the previous Blueprint. **Annex D** provides a detailed comparison.

While five action lines to be acted upon are totally new and are not in the previous Blueprint, it is interesting to note that three of these action lines are similar (word by word) from the previous Blueprint. These are on the matters of (1) strengthening the rule of law, judicial systems and legal infrastructure; (2) enhancing the role of the Secretary-General of ASEAN in regard to the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and (3) promoting public participation in the development of cooperation in post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation.

The other four still-to-be addressed action lines could be considered as having the same intention or purpose. These are on matters of (1) the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC); (2) voluntary electoral observations; (3) development of university curricula on legal systems of individual ASEAN Member State; and (4) promoting research and scholarly publications by ASEAN think-tanks and academic institutions.

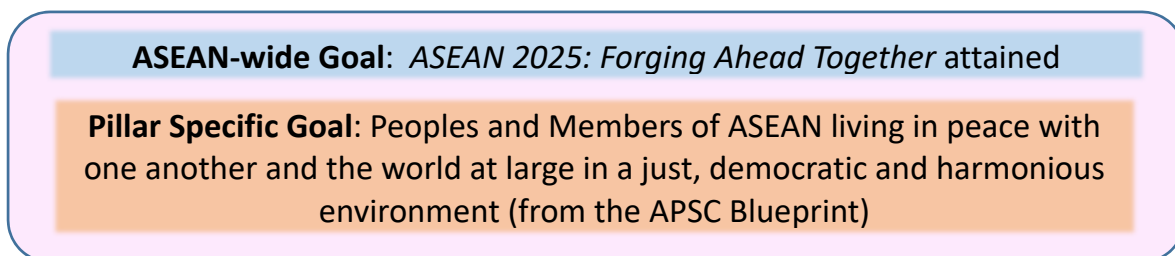
It is also worth noting that all the action lines that have been identified in the Blueprint to be implemented by mid-term have already been acted upon as of June 2020. Specifically, all action lines whose timeline of implementation is short-term have been acted upon. The remaining action lines had been identified for implementation in the long-term. This indicates that the APSC is on the right track as regards the implementation of its Blueprint.

## Assessment Framework

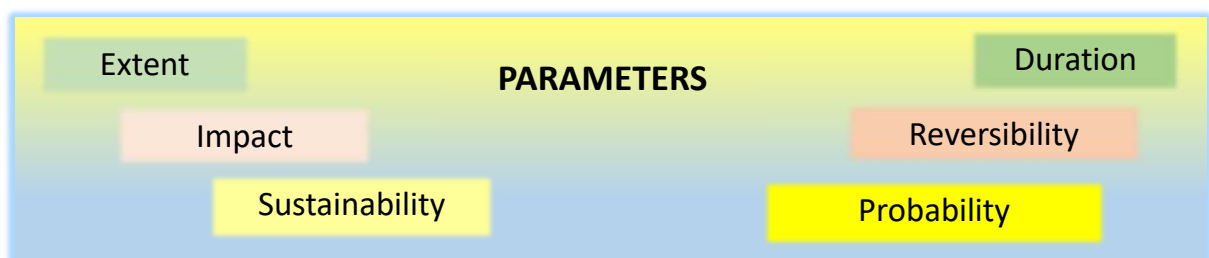
In assessing the implementation of the *APSC Blueprint 2025*, the following monitoring and evaluation framework is utilised. It is to be noted this framework was presented during the 11<sup>th</sup> ASCCO held in March 2019. The inputs from the conference participants were then incorporated into the proposed framework, which contributed to the refinement of the said framework. The refined framework was then subsequently presented to the Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) in late 2019 and early 2020. The framework attempts to provide both a quantitative and qualitative assessment of the progress of the implementation of the *APSC Blueprint 2025* thus far.

Each of the activities identified as having addressed a particular action line is evaluated or benchmarked vis-à-vis which level of goal has it primarily contributed to in accomplishing: (1) the pillar goal of the ASEAN Political-Security Community Goal or (2) the ASEAN-wide community building goal. It is also possible that a particular activity is seen to have contributed relatively in equal terms to both the pillar goal and the ASEAN-wide goal, hence the third category of both.

As seen on the chart below, the ASEAN-wide community building goal is the attainment of what is stated in the *ASEAN Vision 2025* document, which is forging ahead together. The APSC pillar specific goal is having peoples and members of ASEAN living in peace with one another and the world at large in a just, democratic and harmonious environment. This pillar-specific goal is adapted from the *APSC Blueprint 2025* itself.



Two sets of parameters are utilised for a qualitative assessment of the activities. The first set (found on the left side of the chart below) are what could be considered as “Activity-related”. These are the following: (1) **extent**, (2) **impact**, and (3) **sustainability**. The second set of parameters (found on the right side of the chart below) relate to the effects of an activity and, hence, could be rightfully considered as “Effect-related” variables. These are (1) **duration**, (2) **reversibility**, and (3) **probability**.



These six (6) parameters are defined as:

- Extent: Level (*pillar, ASEAN-wide or both*) where an activity has directly contributed to attaining the concerned goal
- Impact: Magnitude of an activity's contribution to the levels of goals (*zero, low, medium, high*)
- Sustainability: Possibility of the activity being continued (*likely, unlikely*)
- Duration: Period of time the effect of the activity could be felt (*short-term, medium-term or long-term*)
- Reversibility: Possibility that the activity's effects could be undone (*reversible, irreversible*)
- Probability: Chance of the intended effect happening (*Unlikely [0-25%], Possible [26-50%], Probable [51-75%], Definite [76-100%]*)

Admittedly, while care was exercised to ensure objectivity in evaluation using these parameters, it must be noted that just like in any assessment, the evaluation is anchored on the perceptions of the ones undertaking the evaluation.

For this assessment, evaluation was done by APSCD divisions on the activities under their respective purviews. This is premised on the fact that as divisions in charge of such activities and having provided input in the previous matrix of implementation and now currently into the Database of the *APSC Blueprint 2025*, they are in a good position to evaluate the said activities. This would allow a better appreciation of the results of the assessment.

## Methodology

To facilitate data management and possible analysis, a database was developed internally by the Analysis and Monitoring Division of the APSC Department.

The data in the database was then

extracted and relevant divisions of the APSCD provided an evaluation of the activities, including outcomes under their respective purviews, using the six parameters outlined

The screenshot displays the 'WELCOME TO THE APSC BLUEPRINT DATABASE' interface. It features a sidebar with 'ASPECT OF THE BLUEPRINT' options: Rules Based, People Oriented People Centered Community; Peaceful, Secure and Stable Region; ASEAN Centrality in a Dynamic and Outward-Looking Region; Strengthened ASEAN Institutional Capacity and Presence; and Implementation and Review. The main area includes fields for 'Action Line', 'Timeline', 'Implementing Body', 'Participants', 'Status', 'Start Date', and 'End Date'. There are also sections for 'Assessments/Observations', 'Recommendations/Other Remarks', and 'Updates By: User: RJO, LPH: AMD'. Navigation buttons include 'Search Database', 'Record Entry', and 'Close Database'. A 'Print' section offers options like 'An Action Line', 'Support', 'Export to MS Word', 'Changes', 'An Action Line', 'Aspect', and 'Support'.



and discussed above. The evaluation by the divisions have been consolidated accordingly and the results are presented in the next section.

For uniformity of presentation, the data presented using the pie charts provides an overview of how the 540 entries comprising of activities and/or outputs have been evaluated using the six parameters outlined above. Afterwards, for each section of the Blueprint, the proportion of activities benchmarked vis-à-vis the categories under each of the parameters are computed. Using ratio and proportion in effect standardises and allows the comparison of data across the Blueprint sections vis-à-vis the categories of the parameters for evaluation, considering that the total number of activities undertaken under each section varies. This comparison across sections of the Blueprint is presented using the column charts.

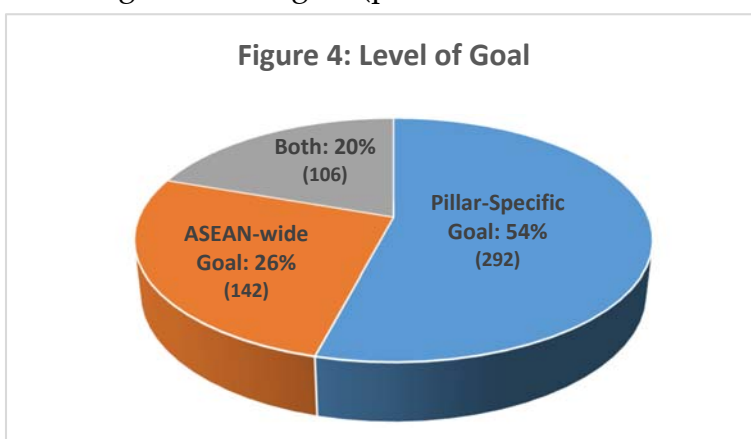
It must be clarified at this juncture that while there are 10 action lines under the section *Implementation and Review*, the activities under this section were excluded from being evaluated by the divisions for the reason that the activities therein are more procedural in nature, referring to how the review of the Blueprint's implementation shall be undertaken in annual, biennial, mid-term and end-of-term bases as well as how the results of such reviews would be reported by the Secretary-General of ASEAN.

## Results of Assessment

### *Activity or Output Related Parameters*

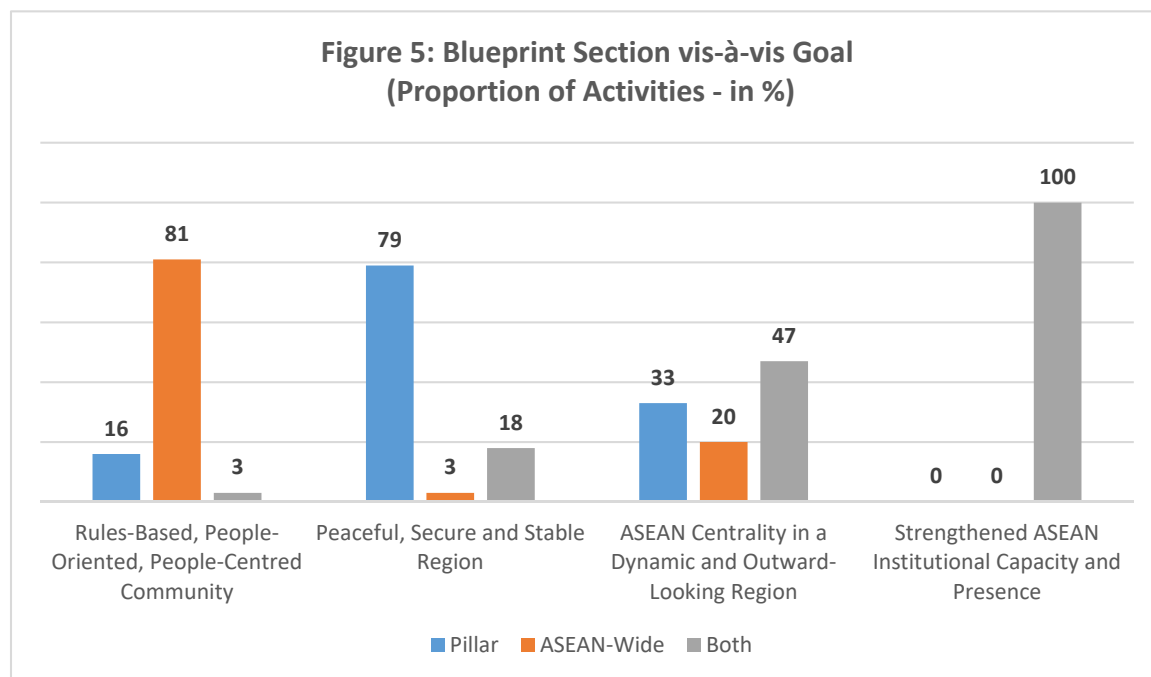
#### Extent

On the extent or level (whether pillar, ASEAN-wide or both) where an activity and/or an output has directly contributed in attaining the stated goal (please refer to the framework above), more than half (54%) of the total entries (540) evaluated has contributed to the pillar-specific goal, more than one fourth (26%) has contributed in attaining the ASEAN-wide goal while almost one-fifth (20%) has made a contribution to both the goals of the APSC as a pillar and to the goal of the wider ASEAN Community.



As shown in the chart below, the greatest proportion (81%) of activities conducted under the first section (*Rules-Based, People-Oriented, People-Centred Community*) of the Blueprint has contributed to the ASEAN-wide goal, while only 16% has directly contributed to the pillar-specific goal. Three percent (3%) contributed both to the pillar-specific goal and the ASEAN-wide goal. The high proportion of activities (81%) undertaken under this section contributing to the wider ASEAN goal underscores APSC's emphasis and contribution to the larger goal of cross-pillar cooperation and ASEAN Community building.

It is interesting to note that the greatest proportion of activities (79%) under the second section (*Peaceful, Secure and Stable Region*) is seen as contributing solely to the pillar-specific goal and only 3% is evaluated to have contributed to the wider ASEAN goal. It is noteworthy that almost one-fifth (18%) of activities under this section has contributed to both the pillar-specific goal and the wider ASEAN goal.



Almost half (47%) of the activities under the third section (*ASEAN Centrality in a Dynamic and Outward-Looking Region*) of the Blueprint have contributed to both the ASEAN-wide goal and the pillar-specific goal. A third (33%) of the activities contributed to the pillar-specific goal and one-fifth (20%) contributed to the ASEAN-wide goal.

Interestingly, all the activities (100%) under the section *Strengthened ASEAN Institutional Capacity and Presence* are seen to have contributed to both the pillar-specific goal and the ASEAN-wide goal.

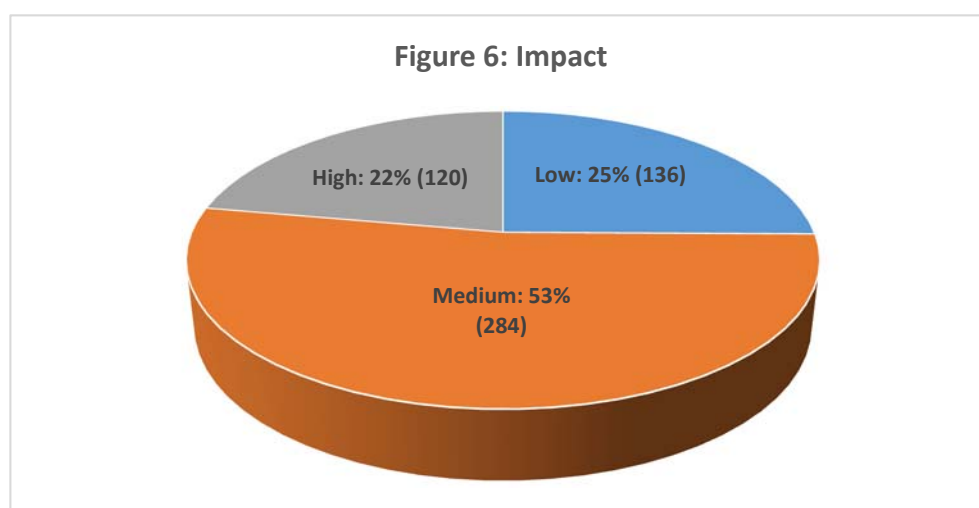


In summary, across the four sections of the Blueprint, it is the activities under the first section (*Rules-Based, People-Oriented, People-Centred Community*) which have contributed the most (81%) to the ASEAN-wide goal and it is the activities under the second section of the Blueprint (*Peaceful, Secure and Stable Region*) which have contributed the most (79%) to the pillar-specific goal.

### Impact

The activities and/or outputs were then evaluated relative to their perceived contribution in achieving either the pillar-specific goal or the ASEAN-wide goal or both, where appropriate. Such magnitude could either be zero, low, medium or high. For this parameter, it is interesting to note that the majority (53%) is seen to have medium impact.

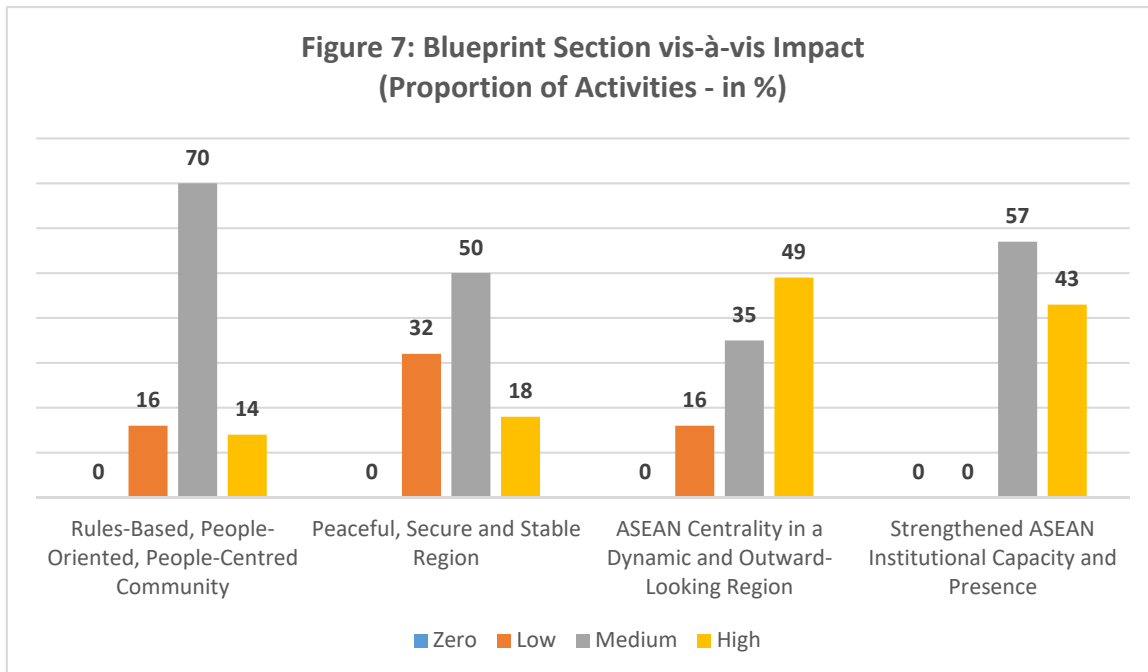
There is a greater proportion (25%) of the activities and/or outputs that are perceived to have low impact as compared to those that are considered as high impact activities and/or outputs (22%).



Looking at the impact of activities undertaken under each of the sections of the Blueprint reveals the following observations. First, across the four sections of the Blueprint, the greatest proportion, which is almost half (49%) of activities that are seen to be of high impact, are under the third section (*ASEAN Centrality in a Dynamic and Outward-Looking Region*) followed by activities (43%) under the fourth section (*Strengthened ASEAN Institutional Capacity and Presence*).

Second, the proportion of high impact activities under the other two sections (*Rules-Based, People-Oriented, People-Centred Community* and *Peaceful, Secure and Stable Region*) are almost the same, 14% and 18%, respectively.

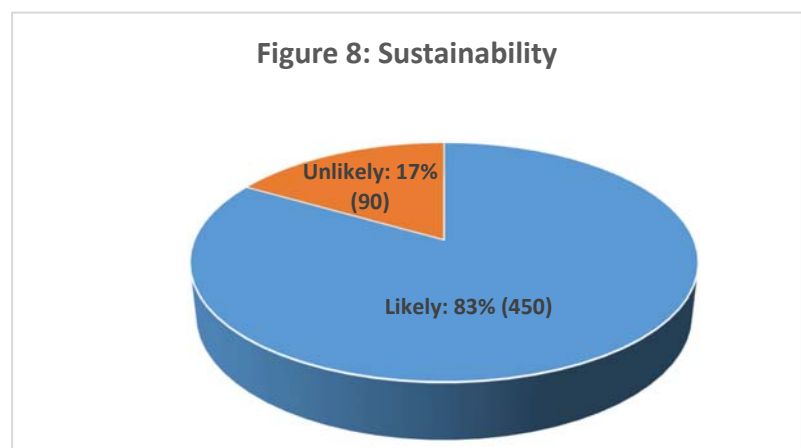
Third, except for the third section (*ASEAN Centrality in a Dynamic and Outward-Looking Region*), activities of medium impact comprise the bulk of activities, 70%, 50% and



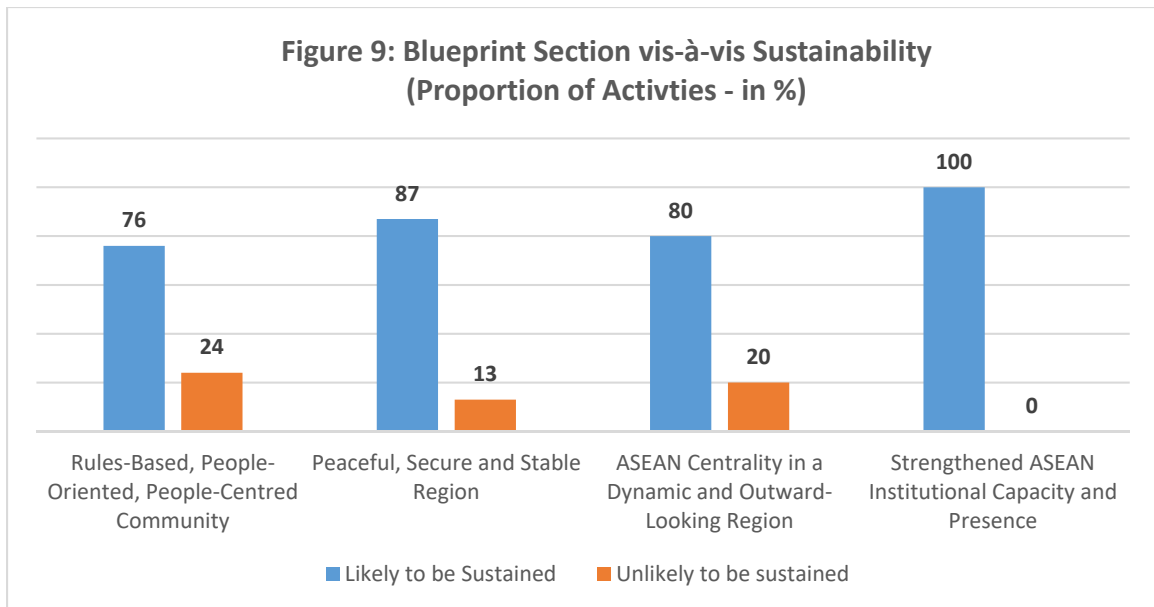
57% for the first (*Rules-Based, People-Oriented, People-Centred Community*), second (*Peaceful, Secure and Stable Region*), and fourth (*Strengthened ASEAN Institutional Capacity and Presence*) sections.

Sustainability

Around 83% of the activities evaluated are most likely to be continued, with only 17% being seen as unlikely to be continued. This may indicate that sectoral bodies under the APSC have been conducting activities, with sustainability as a key consideration.



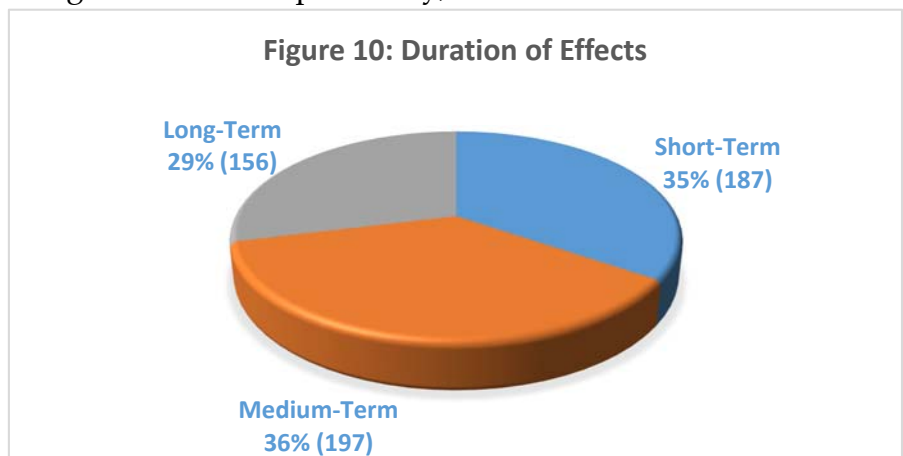
All the activities undertaken under the fourth section of the Blueprint (*Strengthened ASEAN Institutional Capacity and Presence*) are seen as most likely to be continued and hence sustainable. The proportion of activities considered as sustainable across the three other sections is almost at the same level, 76%, 87% and 80%. The greatest proportion (24%) of activities considered as not likely to be sustained is found in the first section (*Rules-Based, People-Oriented, People-Centred Community*).



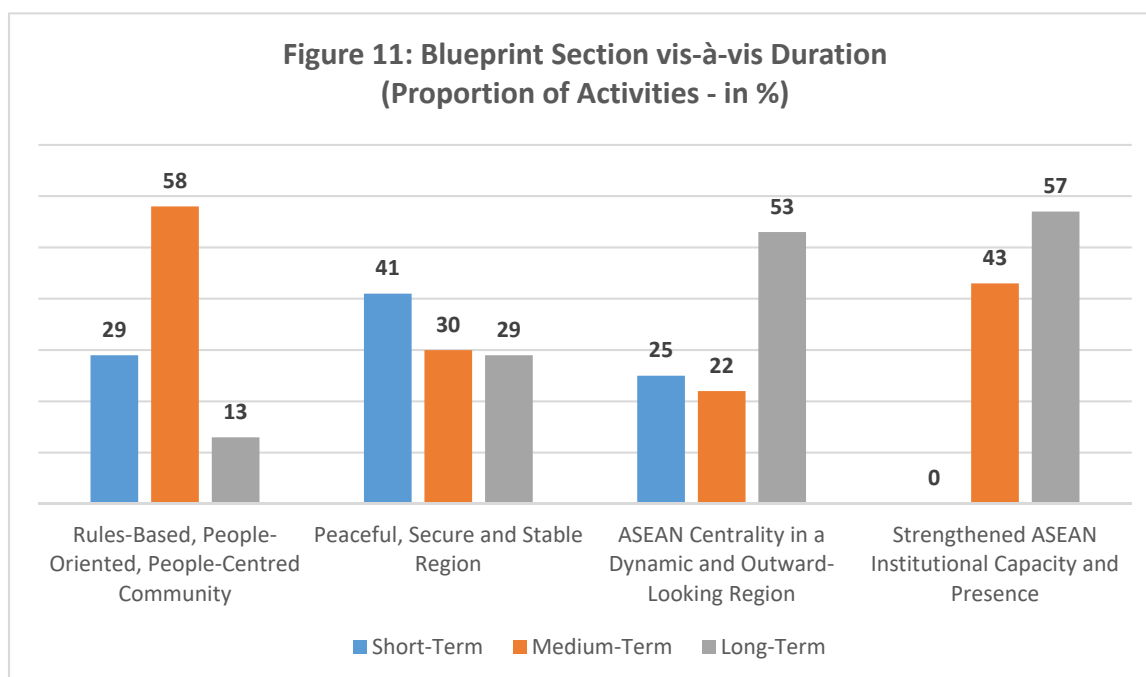
*Effects-Related Parameters*

Duration

With regard to how long the effect of an activity was most likely to be felt, evaluators indicated that effects of the activities are relatively spread among the three time frames: short, medium and long term. More specifically, 36% of the activities conducted and/or output produced would most likely have their effects felt in the medium-term, while 35% is expected to have their effects felt in the short-term. The effects of 29% of the activities and/or outputs would most likely be felt over the long-term.



The greatest proportion (57%) of activities and/or outputs whose effects are expected to be felt over the long-term was found under the fourth section of the Blueprint (*Strengthened ASEAN Institutional Capacity and Presence*), followed closely by activities (53%) under the third section (*ASEAN Centrality in a Dynamic and Outward-Looking Region*). The rest of the activities under the third section are expected to have their effects to be felt almost equally in the short-term (25%) and medium-term (22%).

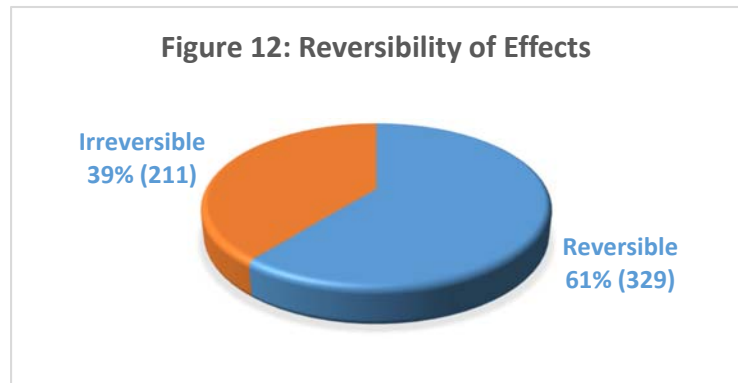


The smallest proportion (13%) of such activities and/or outputs having long-term effects are under the first section (*Rules-Based, People-Oriented, People-Centred Community*) with the bulk of activities (58%) under this section are seen to have their effects felt in the medium-term.

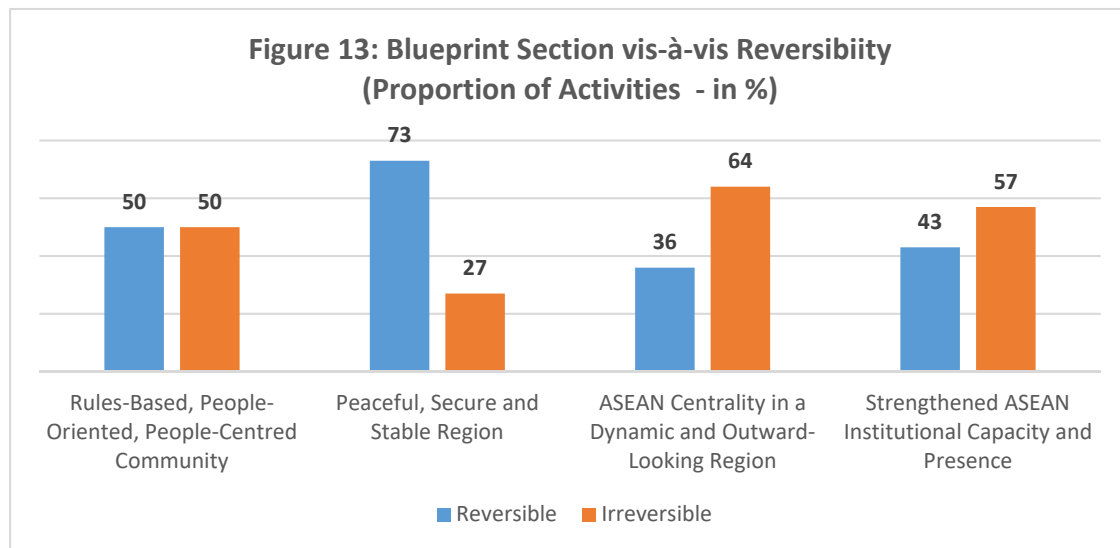
Almost half (41%) of activities under the second section (*Peaceful, Secure and Stable Region*) are seen to have their effects felt in the short-term while the rest of the activities are expected to have their effects felt in the medium-term (30%) and long-term (29%).

## Reversibility

To recall, reversibility refers to the possibility that the activity's effects could be undone. For this parameter, it is notable that a greater proportion (61%) of the activities and/or outputs has been evaluated to be reversible as compared to those (39%) whose effects are seen as irreversible.



Among the four sections of the Blueprint, the second section (*Peaceful, Secure and Stable Region*) has the greatest proportion of activities (73%) whose effects could be undone, or considered as reversible. Likewise, it is this section which has the least proportion of activities (27%) whose effects are considered difficult to be undone.



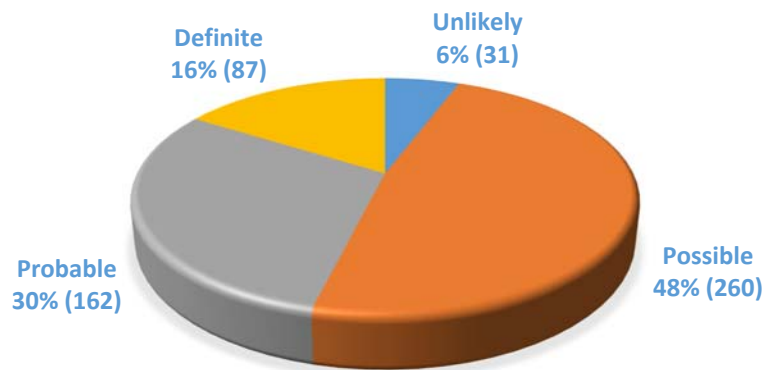
The activities under the first section (*Rules-Based, People-Oriented, People-Centred Community*) are evenly split between those whose effects are reversible and those whose effects are irreversible. For the two other sections (*ASEAN Centrality in a Dynamic and Outward-Looking Region* and *Strengthened ASEAN Institutional Capacity and Presence*), a greater proportion (64% and 57%, respectively) of activities is seen to have their effects irreversible, as compared to the proportion of activities (36% and 43%, respectively) whose effects is seen to be reversible.

*Probability*

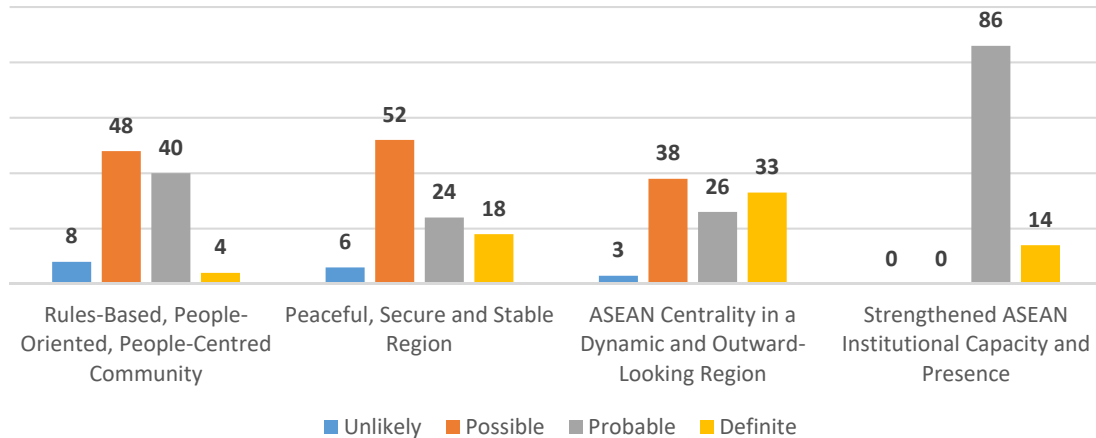
The activities and/or outputs have likewise been assessed in terms of the chances of their intended effect taking place. If such probability is seen from being nil to 25%, it is labelled as “unlikely”. If the chances of an activity/output range from 26% to 50%, it is categorised as “possible”. “Probable” means having such probability beyond 50% up to three fourths of a chance. It must be stressed that while the word “definite” connotes almost absolute certainty, the category of “definite” in this report refers to the range (76%-100%) of probability of chances of the intended effect taking place.

Interestingly, the evaluators were confident that 16% of the activities and/or outputs undertaken and produced thus far had their effects definitely taking place. Evaluators were of the view that 6% of these activities and/or outputs had effects which are seen to be unlikely to take shape, meaning such activities may amount to a waste of resources. Forty-eight percent of activities and/or outputs are seen to have their effects possibly taking place while 30% are seen to have their effects probably being effected.

**Figure 14: Probability of Intended Effect Happening**



**Figure 15: Blueprint Section vis-à-vis Probability of Intended Effect Happening (Proportion of Activities - in %)**



Among the four sections of the Blueprint (see Figure 15 on previous page), the proportion of activities evaluated to have their intended effects possibly (25%-50%) happening are almost at the same level for the first three sections, with 48% for the section *Rules-Based, People-Oriented, People-Centred Community*, 52% for the section *Peaceful, Secure and Stable Region* and 38% for the section *ASEAN Centrality in a Dynamic and Outward-Looking Region*.

The section *Strengthened ASEAN Institutional Capacity and Presence* has the greatest proportion (86%) of activities whose intended effects are seen to probably (51%-75% chance) take place, followed by the section *Rules-Based, People-Oriented, People-Centred Community* with 40%. The two other sections (*Peaceful, Secure and Stable Region* and *ASEAN Centrality in a Dynamic and Outward-Looking Region*) have 24% and 26% of the activities expected to have their effects probably happening.

Across the four sections of the Blueprint, the greatest proportion of activities (33%) whose effects are seen to definitely (76%-100%) take place is under the section *ASEAN Centrality in a Dynamic and Outward-Looking Region* while the least proportion (4%) of activities which is seen to have effects definitely taking place are found in the section *Rules-Based, People-Oriented, People-Centred Community*.

## Recalling the Progress of Implementation

It is difficult to measure and quantify how ASEAN or the ASEAN Member States have developed a sense of being a political security community, or in other words, “political security community-ness” within ASEAN. However, what could not be denied is the fact that sectoral bodies under ASEAN’s Political-Security Community Pillar have become closer to each other through their regular and close interaction and in implementing the various action lines stipulated in the *APSC Blueprint 2025*. The numerous ASEAN platforms have enabled the political leadership, including Leaders and Foreign Ministers as well as various sectors such as defence, law enforcement, and immigration, among others to develop a sense of community. Cross-sectoral platforms under the APSC Pillar such as the Coordinating Conference for the ASEAN Political-Security Community (ASCCO) have generated greater awareness of each other’s priorities among different sectoral bodies.



The *APSC Blueprint 2025* as a roadmap towards building an ASEAN Political-Security Community must be appreciated in the context of it containing action lines that are political commitments, aspirational statements and measurable items. Notwithstanding that it does contain political and aspirational elements, almost all of the action lines (282 out of 290) are measurable.

As evident in the above discussion, the implementation of the *APSC Blueprint 2025* has progressed well with 96% (278) of the action lines already acted upon. Only 12 action lines are still to be acted upon with five years to go to 2025. All the action lines for the short and mid-term have been acted upon, indicating that rightfully, only those action lines slated to be implemented over the long-term remain to be worked on.

It is worth recalling that in regard to the parameters used in assessing the 540 activities undertaken in implementing the action lines of the *APSC Blueprint 2025*, more than half (54%) of the activities have contributed solely in attaining the pillar-specific goal of the APSC Community, more than a fourth (26%) contributed to goals of the wider ASEAN Community and one fifth (20%) contributed to both the goals of the Pillar and ASEAN as a whole (please refer to Figure 4 above).

In terms of **impact**, 50 percent have medium impact, 25% have high impact and 25% have low impact. More than 80% of the activities are expected to be **sustained**. With regard to **duration**, almost the same proportion of activities is seen to have their effects felt over the short (35%), medium (36%), or long-term (29%). It is worth noting that 40% of activities are seen to have their effects **irreversible** or long-lasting although a greater proportion (60%) is seen to have their effects reversible and. In terms of the **probability** of the activities' intended effect taking place, almost half of all the activities are seen to have their intended effects possibly happening, a third probably happening, almost 20 percent definitely happening. Only a handful (6%) are seen to have their effects unlikely happening.

As stated in the *Joint Communiqué* of the 53<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting held on 9 September 2020, the Ministers are “encouraged that the majority of the activities undertaken, thus far, have medium to high impact on ASEAN Community-building, and 80% of the activities were expected to be sustained in the future.”

## Challenges Encountered

Notwithstanding the remarkable progress noted above, it is worth noting that challenges have been encountered in the implementation of the *APSC Blueprint 2025*. The 12<sup>th</sup> Coordinating Conference on ASEAN Political-Security Community (12<sup>th</sup> ASCCO) held on 1 September 2020 enabled the sectoral bodies under the APSC Pillar, ASEAN Member States (AMS) as well as entities associated with the APSC Pillar to share their experience and key challenges that have been encountered in the implementation of the action lines of the *APSC Blueprint 2025*.

### *On Public Awareness*

A foremost challenge, as acknowledged by the ASEAN SOM Chair, is enhancing public awareness of the ASEAN Political-Security Community, something that has been raised in the discussions of foreign ministers and senior officials. This is a key realisation given that the building of a political security community indeed should not only be confined among and between governments of the AMS but more importantly is something that should be developed among the peoples of ASEAN themselves. This is something that could be best facilitated if the ASEAN peoples are fully aware of and can understand the construct of an ASEAN Political-Security Community as well as the various activities being undertaken to promote and develop a sense of political security community in ASEAN. Along this line, there is a need to find creative ways to raise the awareness of ASEAN among the general public especially the youth, which is essential in order to make them understand and appreciate the work of ASEAN specifically in promoting peace and stability and develop a sense of ownership on the ASEAN Community building process.

### *On ASEAN Centrality*

Meanwhile, it is noted that the various ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) and the ADMM-Plus, have enabled ASEAN to be the driving force in the regional political security architecture, thereby allowing ASEAN to promote and preserve ASEAN Centrality towards regional peace, security and stability. In fact, the data shows that across the four sections of the Blueprint, the greatest proportion of activities (49%) that is seen to be of high impact are under the section

*ASEAN Centrality in a Dynamic and Outward-looking Region*. This means that 1 out of 2 activities seen to be of high-impact were undertaken in regard to promoting ASEAN Centrality.

However, operationalising and ensuring ASEAN Centrality is another key challenge that has been acknowledged. The ASEAN Defence Senior Officials' Meeting (ADSOM) Chair during the 12<sup>th</sup> ASCCO provided an example of how, in the ADMM-Plus process, promoting ASEAN Centrality has become challenging. He cited that the implementation of the *Concept Paper on Observership of ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Groups* has been delayed due to the objection, not from the ASEAN Member States, but from some of the Plus Countries. To recall, membership in the ADMM-Plus is currently limited to ASEAN and eight of its Dialogue Partners (Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russia and the United States). In 2017, the proposal to allow non-Plus countries to take part as observers in the activities of the ADMM-Plus EWGs was introduced. The observership programme was designed in recognition of the need to meaningfully engage the non-Plus Countries, as well as the increasing number of countries expressing their interest in ADMM-Plus activities. The implementation of the observership programme, including the assessment of current applications such as those of Canada, France and the United Kingdom, is still subject to the broader discussions on ADMM's external relations and the modality for implementation of the observership programme.

Notwithstanding this difficulty, what must be recognised is ASEAN's sustained approach of deepening cooperation with its dialogue partners as well as reaching out to new potential partners, in accordance with its thrust to remain an inclusive and outward-looking community and to play a constructive role regionally and globally. The Special ASEAN SOM on ASEAN's External Relations conducted on 1 September 2020 highlighted that ASEAN is committed to upholding ASEAN Centrality, and continues to be the driving force in shaping the regional architecture which is open, inclusive, transparent and rules-based. In addition, the ASEAN SOM is also looking at ways in which ASEAN may strengthen its existing external relations and find ways to engage with new potential partners including by discussing a comprehensive approach for ASEAN in the conduct of its external relations.

### *On Cross-Pillar Issues*

It is also worth noting that there is an increasing recognition among ASEAN sectoral bodies of the increasing importance of pursuing cross-pillar coordination and cooperation given the multi-dimensional nature of the many issues that ASEAN faces. Such increasing awareness has been notable during the interventions of the sectoral bodies and AMS both during the Workshop on Cross-Pillar Issues organised by the Committee of Representatives to ASEAN (CPR) and the ASEAN Secretariat held on 13 August 2020 as well as during the 12<sup>th</sup> ASCCO held on 1 September 2020.

Coordination and communication among relevant agencies involved on security issues, which are mostly cross-pillar in nature, need to be further enhanced. It is worth noting that Senior Officials' Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) shared that it intends to conduct cross-sectoral and cross-pillar consultation for the final review of the *Bohol Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Work Plan (2017-2020)*, a manifestation of the increasing recognition of the utility of a cross-pillar approach and the importance of strengthening cooperation through the development of harmonised messages disseminated across various means of communication and levels of coordination among relevant sectoral bodies on issues of common concern relative to transnational crime. Yet, it is also worth noting that SOMTC manifested that such efforts against trafficking in person in the region are still to be undertaken in accordance with respective domestic laws and policies, an indication of the primacy given to national approaches vis-à-vis a regional approach.

Relatedly, ASEAN SOM has noted that some efforts have been made to address this challenge of promoting cross-pillar cooperation including the identification of lead sectoral body for each cross-pillar issue. To recall, it was during the Joint Consultative Meeting (JCM) held on 12 August 2016 that the ASEAN Secretariat was tasked to identify cross-cutting issues arising from the three Community Pillars. This was meant to facilitate discussions on cross-pillar cooperation. Consequently, the ASEAN Secretariat surfaced an initial indicative list of 34 cross-sectoral and cross-pillar issues, with the basic criterion that if each of the three Community Pillars deals with an aspect of an issue, then an issue could be considered as a cross-pillar issue. In other words, an issue will have to be multi-dimensional, with each dimension dealt with by a Community Pillar of ASEAN.

This initial list was then tabled at the JCM in March 2017, and since then has been periodically updated by the ASEAN Secretariat's desk officers. Considered as a "living document", all ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and Organs under the three pillars continuously

provide inputs and updates as appropriate. The initial list of 34 issues has today grown to 38 cross-cutting and cross-pillar issues (**Annex E**). In the meantime, the process of identifying lead sectoral bodies on these issues is being undertaken. To date, 28 out of the 38 issues contained in the list already have a confirmed lead sectoral body.

Of the 38 issues identified in the list, eleven (11) could be considered as falling primarily under the purview of sectoral bodies under the APSC Pillar. These are (1) trafficking in persons and people smuggling, (2) maritime security and cooperation, (3) counter-terrorism, (4) cybersecurity and cybercrime, (5) peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding, (6) human rights, (7) illicit drugs, (8) environmental crime, (9) money laundering and international economic crime, (10) nuclear safety and nuclear security, and (11) border management.

Of the eleven cross-pillar issues falling under the APSC Pillar, lead sectoral bodies are still to be confirmed for the following: (1) cybersecurity and cybercrime, (2) peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding, (3) environmental crime, and (4) money laundering and international economic crime.

One issue that needs to be addressed in identifying an appropriate lead sectoral body is the need to delink or separate some of the cross-pillar issues that have been clustered together under a single line item because they comprise several issues that may actually fall under the primary purview of different sectoral bodies. These include (1) cybersecurity and cybercrime, (2) trafficking in persons and people smuggling, (3) maritime security and cooperation, and (4) peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding.

Specific to the discussion on lead sectoral body for cybersecurity and cybercrime, it is worth noting that the ASEAN Digital Senior Officials' Meeting (ADGSOM), which is under the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Pillar, is being considered as the lead sectoral body for cybersecurity. This is contained in the proposed *Terms of Reference (TOR) of the ASEAN Cybersecurity Coordination Committee (ASEAN Cyber-CC)*. In the same way, SOMTC is being considered as the lead sectoral body for cybercrime. Meanwhile, SOMTC has manifested that it is the lead sectoral body for trafficking in persons but not for people smuggling. The sectoral body (SOM) that has confirmed to be the lead for maritime cooperation has manifested that while it is in a position to take the lead in regard to maritime cooperation, maritime security is better addressed under the purview of another sectoral body.

Relatedly, a lot more is still to be done especially in clarifying the roles and functions of the lead sectoral bodies and its relations with relevant line agencies. Thus, there is an urgency to finalise the *Terms of Reference for the Lead Sectoral Bodies of ASEAN Cross-Pillar Issues* at the soonest possible time. It would be a step in the right direction towards pursuing activities across sectors and pillars that address cross-pillar issues.

### *On Diversity in Systems and Capacities*

Related to the matter of promoting cross-pillar cooperation is the diversity in systems of ASEAN Member States. As shared by ASLOM (*ASEAN Senior Law Officials' Meeting*), it is challenging to implement activities that involve AICHR (*ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights*), SOMSWD (*Senior Officials' Meeting on Social Welfare and Development*), SLOM (*Senior Labour Officials' Meeting*), SOMTC (*Senior Officials' Meeting on Transnational Crime*), SOM-MLAT (*Senior Officials' Meeting on the Treaty of Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters*) and ACW (*ASEAN Committee on Women*), considering that laws and legal matters among the ASEAN Member States are diverse; hence, it is challenging to obtain ASLOM's common view or consensus on any matters presented to ASLOM. Most views from this sectoral body are from individual ASLOM member's perspective, rather than from ASLOM as a body. In addition to diversity in systems being a challenge, differences on capacity among the ASEAN Member States is another challenge encountered in implementing the action lines of the *APSC Blueprint 2025*.

### **Way Forward**

It is worth noting that the mid-term review of the *APSC Blueprint 2025* is taking place during the year when the COVID-19 pandemic has taken centre stage in global and regional affairs. The pandemic has provided an opportunity for ASEAN Member States to further enhance their solidarity and unity, specifically in combatting the pandemic and the corresponding economic fall-out. It has reinforced the sense that at the end of the day, the ASEAN Community is centered on its people, for they are the ones ultimately impacted by the pandemic. The commitment to ensure that ASEAN remains cohesive in addressing the pandemic is evident at the highest level of political leadership within ASEAN.



Amidst the challenges identified above, ASEAN as a whole and the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) Pillar in particular, has considered how to move forward in order to sustain the momentum of community building. Given the myriad of suggestions generated during the 12<sup>th</sup> ASCCO, three main aspects of moving forward are put forth: (1) a review and examination of the reasons why the 12 action lines are still to be implemented, (2) promoting cooperation and coordination on cross-pillar issues, and (3) updating the *Blueprint 2025* to ensure it remains adaptive and responsive to the changing global and regional landscape.

### *On the Still-to-be-Acted-Upon Action Lines*

In accordance with the guidance of the 21<sup>st</sup> APSC Council Meeting held in June 2020, a comparison between the still-to-be-acted-upon action lines in the *APSC Blueprint 2025* and the *APSC Blueprint 2015* was undertaken. The comparison resulted in the following findings as presented in the earlier section of this report. Three (3) of these action lines are the same (word by word) as in the previous Blueprint while four (4) of the still-to-be-addressed action lines could be considered as having the same intention or purpose. The other five (5) action lines still to be acted upon are totally new and are not in the previous Blueprint.

It is therefore instructive that a decision be arrived as to what should be done with the action lines, which had been carried over from the previous Blueprint, but remain to be acted upon (like what was the case in the previous Blueprint) as well as identify relevant proponents to ensure ownership of these action lines and move forward with their implementation. Does this mean that they are simply difficult or even impossible to undertake? As pointed out during the 12<sup>th</sup> ASCCO, it is incumbent upon APSC Sectoral Bodies to reflect as to the reasons why they have not been able to undertake activities to implement the said action lines.

It is also instructive to arrive at a decision on action line B.2.-iii (*Activate the ASEAN Troika to address urgent situations affecting regional peace and stability in a timely manner*). As highlighted during the 12<sup>th</sup> ASCCO, its being acted upon, i.e. the activation of the Troika, is contingent on having an urgent situation that has arisen which could affect regional peace and stability. The absence of such urgent situation affecting regional peace and stability is actually a good indicator that Community building in ASEAN is



progressing well. In the absence of such an urgent issue, the activation of the Troika would be unnecessary, leaving this action line tagged as unaddressed.

As manifested during the 12<sup>th</sup> ASCCO, there is a need to further enhance information sharing among AMS, across sectoral bodies and even with the ASEAN Secretariat as regards activities undertaken to implement the *APSC Blueprint 2025's* action lines. This would ensure that activities undertaken are appropriately communicated to the ASEAN Secretariat and duly recorded in the APSC Blueprint Database.

A case in point is the *ASEAN Workshop on Election Observation: Incremental Steps Towards the Establishment of an ASEAN Election Observation Mechanism*, which was organised by the Philippines on 24-25 June 2015. While it may be understandable why this has not been recorded in the APSC Blueprint 2025 Database given that it was held on the last year of the previous APSC Blueprint, a record of this would have been helpful in determining if follow-up actions have been undertaken. Such a record could also have encouraged the pursuit of follow-up action. This activity or a related activity would implement action line A.2.1.iii (*Compile best practices on voluntary electoral observations and share such information among ASEAN Member States*), one of the 12 still-to-be-acted-upon action lines.

It is imperative for sectoral bodies, AMS and even entities associated with the ASEAN Political-Security Community to take a more proactive approach in undertaking activities relative to the action lines that are still to be acted upon. In the meantime, discussions on the reasons and factors why such action line remain unacted upon at this time would be useful in drawing up lessons for future reference. Such discussions could be pursued in subsequent convening of the ASCCO or even inter-sessionally facilitated by the ASEAN Secretariat.

Overall, and if the action line on the activation of the Troika gets excluded from the list of still-to-be-acted-upon action lines as discussed above, the prospects of having all action lines implemented by 2025, is high considering that there are five (5) years left to implement the *APSC Blueprint 2025* in its entirety. As observed during the 12<sup>th</sup> ASCCO, a key question that has to be grappled with is what should be done if and when all the action lines have been acted upon. What should not be overlooked though is the need to undertake activities that would sustain the implementation or action on

action lines that have already been acted upon. The mid-term evaluation provides insights on what elements or sections need improvement or strengthening to increase contributions to both the pillar-specific and the wider ASEAN goals, deepen impact, ensure sustainability and irreversibility, and increase the probability of achieving the intended effects. The tendency to be fixated or focusing solely and only on the remaining action lines to be acted upon should be avoided.

### *On Promoting Cooperation on Cross-Pillar Issues*

As previously mentioned, there is an increasing recognition of the importance as well as imperative of approaching issues faced by ASEAN in a cross-pillar manner. The increasing cross-pillar nature of these issues requires a holistic and multi-dimensional approach. During the 53<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMM), some Ministers highlighted and reinforced previous discussions on the importance of breaking the siloed pillar-centric approach including the need for a coordinated approach in cross-sectoral and cross-pillar collaboration and if applicable, the development of terms of reference (TOR)/rules of procedures (ROP) for ease of reference in coordinating cross-pillar, cross-sector and/or cross-ministerial cooperation.

While the momentum about discussions on cross-pillar cooperation is gaining ground, two trends may be observed. First is the increasing number of ASEAN's initiatives, including those with its dialogue partners, that are cross-pillar. Indeed, such recognition of the importance of cross-pillar approach is shared by ASEAN's external partners, which have provided additional space for ASEAN and its partners to work together and have an expanded and deepened cooperation. Among such areas are sustainable development, climate change action, the *Women, Peace and Security agenda*, as well as shared global challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Second is the need to strengthen the ASEAN Secretariat as a coordinating hub. In the recently concluded 53<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, some ASEAN Member States viewed that the ASEAN Secretariat could play a more pronounced role, and suggested that its research and monitoring capacities be enhanced in order to provide ASEAN Member States with early/advance warning on emerging, cross-cutting issues, which require timely policy decisions.

Meanwhile, the suggestion from one sectoral body to undertake practical steps in streamlining and promoting synergy among activities, would contribute in further effectively implementing the *APSC Blueprint 2025*, particularly in regard to cross-pillar issues. The ADSOM Chair during the 12<sup>th</sup> ASCCO put forth a practical step of encouraging sectoral bodies to enhance coordination of activities or promote information exchange. An example could be exchange of information between the ARF and the ADMM-Plus. To recall, while both these ASEAN-led mechanisms have security issues as agenda, the ARF is foreign affairs led and is composed of 27 participants while the ADMM-Plus is defence ministry led and involves the 10 ASEAN Member States and 8 ASEAN Dialogue Partners. They have therefore common members as well as a certain degree of overlap in the issues discussed.

The increasing number of issues that are cross-pillar in nature highlight the need to go beyond traditional issues and take cognizance of emerging realities including the use of new technologies as well as persistent and current threats. These issues also highlight the interconnectedness of states and the region-wide effects of threats, particularly how the internal armed conflicts being faced by individual ASEAN Member States could affect the peace and stability of the region. It is also noted that the identification of lead sectoral bodies could also contribute in the implementation of action lines in the *APSC Blueprint 2025* such as the action line on “promot[ing] public participation in the development of cooperation in post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation, including the encouragement of comprehensive input to academia, media, non-governmental organisations, civil society, and community groups.”

### *On Updating the APSC Blueprint 2025*

As provided for in the *APSC Blueprint 2025*, ASEAN Member States “are given the flexibility to update the *APSC Blueprint 2025* (see Implementation and Review item D.ii). This has likewise been emphasised by ASEAN SOM Chair during the 12<sup>th</sup> ASCCO, that as guided by the 21<sup>st</sup> APSC Council, the review shall look into the possibility of updating the Blueprint to ensure that it remains adaptive and relevant to the changed global and regional environment. While the exact modality of updating the *APSC Blueprint 2025* is still to be determined, suggestions on specific issues to be included were surfaced during the 12<sup>th</sup> ASCCO and are alluded to in the *Joint Communiqué* of the 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual Ministerial Meeting (AMM) held in September 2020.

Among such issues that have been suggested for inclusion are adoption of the *ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific*, ASEAN's collective response to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as developments in cybersecurity, and the *Women, Peace and Security agenda*.

In addition to updating of the *APSC Blueprint 2025*, taking into consideration the above mentioned issues and other issues that could be identified in the subsequent exercise to update the Blueprint in the future, it is also useful, as one AMS stressed during the 12<sup>th</sup> ASCCO, to “follow-up on various declarations that ASEAN Leaders and Ministers from the relevant APSC tracks have adopted over the years after the APSC Blueprint” came into effect. Thus, it is imperative that ASEAN focus on re-thinking its approach on the implementation of the Blueprint, whilst also focusing on intensifying its efforts to ensure meaningful action-oriented cooperation through “monitoring compliance with Leaders’ statements and declarations” so that ASEAN’s actions complement the *APSC Blueprint 2025* amidst the changing environment and “work towards incorporating these new commitments in the post-2025 APSC Blueprint”.

## Concluding Note

The APSC Blueprint 2025 Mid-Term Review and the corresponding report is an important exercise as it not only provides an evaluation of where the APSC Pillar is currently in its Community building efforts but has also generated ideas on how best to move forward in the remaining years of implementation towards 2025. The results of the MTR would serve as a good foundation for discussions on an ASEAN post-2025 vision, which has commenced. For sure, the journey towards building a political security community will continue to be fraught with challenges and difficulties especially in today’s political and security landscape characterised by increasing strategic competition among major powers on the one hand and the emergence of non-traditional issues such as the COVID-19 pandemic on the other. But there is great optimism that the overall implementation of the *APSC Blueprint 2025* will not be derailed and the goal of moving towards an ASEAN Political-Security Community further deepened and strengthened in 2025 and beyond remains on track and achievable.

## Annex A: List of Aspirational Statements

Blueprint Section	Action Line	
Rules-Based, People-Oriented People Centered Community	A.1.1.i	Ensure the effective implementation of all provisions of the ASEAN Charter to enable ASEAN to fully function as a rules-based organisation.
Rules-Based, People-Oriented People Centered Community	A.1.1.ii	Ensure the early ratification and effective implementation of the legal instruments of the ASEAN Charter, namely, Agreement on Privileges and Immunities of ASEAN and the Protocol to the ASEAN Charter on Dispute Settlement Mechanisms.
Rules-Based, People-Oriented People Centered Community	A.1.2.i	Ensure the early ratification of ASEAN agreements signed.
Rules-Based, People-Oriented People Centered Community	A.1.2.ii	Ensure the effective implementation of those agreements already ratified by ASEAN Member States.
Rules-Based, People-Oriented People Centered Community	A.1.3.i	Respect the United Nations (UN) Charter and international law governing the peaceful relations among states.

## Annex B: List of Political Statements

Blueprint Section	Action Line	
Peaceful, Secure and Stable Region	B.6.1.v	Resolve territorial and jurisdictional disputes among parties concerned by peaceful means, without resorting to the threat or use of force, through friendly consultations and negotiations by sovereign states directly concerned, in accordance with universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).
Peaceful, Secure and Stable Region	B.6.1.x	Ensure freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea in accordance with universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS.
Peaceful, Secure and Stable Region	B.6.3.i	Support the effective implementation of the relevant international laws and conventions, including the 1982 UNCLOS.

## Annex C: List of Still-to-be-Acted-Upon Action Lines

Blueprint Section	Action Line	
Rules-Based, People-Oriented People-Centred Community	A.1.7.i	Conduct activities to promote the adherence to the underlying principles of the TAC among High Contracting Parties.
Rules-Based, People-Oriented People-Centred Community	A.2.1.iii	Compile best practices on voluntary electoral observations and share such information among ASEAN Member States.
Rules-Based, People-Oriented People-Centred Community	A.2.2.ii	Encourage the inclusion of the culture of good governance in educational curricula.
Rules-Based, People-Oriented People-Centred Community	A.2.4.i	Entrust ASEAN Law Ministers Meeting (ALAWMM), with the cooperation of other Sectoral Bodies and Entities associated with ASEAN, including the ASEAN Law Association (ALA), to develop cooperation programmes to strengthen the rule of law, judicial systems and legal infrastructure.
Rules-Based, People-Oriented People-Centred Community	A.2.4.iv	Enhance access to legal assistance in ASEAN Member States to promote social justice through more public education and outreach activities.
Rules-Based, People-Oriented People-Centred Community	A.2.4.vi	Promote the development of university curricula on legal systems of individual ASEAN Member States and legal instruments pertaining to the ASEAN Community.
Rules-Based, People-Oriented People-Centred Community	A.2.6.iii	Promote research and scholarly publications by ASEAN think-tanks and academic institutions on regional and international developments.
Peaceful, Secure and Stable Region	B.1.3.iii	Enhance the role of the Secretary-General of ASEAN in the ARF, including further strengthening the ARF unit in the ASEAN Secretariat.
Peaceful, Secure and Stable Region	B.2.-.iii	Activate the ASEAN Troika to address urgent situations affecting regional peace and stability in a timely manner.
Peaceful, Secure and Stable Region	B.3.1.ii	Consider accession of third countries to the MLAT 2004.

Peaceful, Secure and Stable Region	B.4.6.ii	Promote public participation in the development of cooperation in post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation, including the encouragement of comprehensive input of academia, media, non-governmental organisations, civil society and community groups.
Peaceful, Secure and Stable Region	B.6.3.iv	Enhance dialogue and cooperation with relevant international organisations, such as the UN, the International Maritime Organization and the International Labour Organization to ensure the effective implementation of conventions and instruments related to maritime cooperation, including, but not limited to, safety of life at sea, the welfare of seafarers, and prevention of pollution from ships.*

\* It is noted that maritime co-operation between ASEAN Member States and the IMO is already ongoing under the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Pillar. Specifically, the ASEAN Maritime Transport Working Group, which has two standing agenda items on this area of cooperation: (i) 'IMO-ASEAN Partnership' that discusses implementation of IMO activities, and (ii) 'Convene regional workshops / seminars to support implementation or ratification of IMO Conventions by ASEAN Member States' under the Kuala Lumpur Strategic Transport Plan for 2016-2025 (KLSTP).



## Annex D: A Comparison of the Still-to-be Addressed Action Lines in APSC Blueprint 2025 with Action Lines in APSC Blueprint 2009-2015

Note: *Blue highlight* – exact restatement of the action line from APSC Blueprint 2009-2015

*Orange highlight* – similar formulation from APSC Blueprint 2009-2015

APSC Blueprint 2016-2025		APSC Blueprint 2009-2015	
A.1.7.i	Conduct activities to promote the adherence to the underlying principles of the TAC among High Contracting Parties.	A.2.2.i	Convene workshops and seminars to assess the progress of the implementation of the TAC and explore ways to improve its mechanisms
		A.2.2.ii	Convene a conference of High Contracting Parties to the TAC to review its implementation
A.2.1.iii	Compile best practices on voluntary electoral observations and share such information among ASEAN Member States.	A.1.1.iii	Endeavour to compile best practices of voluntary electoral observations.
A.2.2.ii	Encourage the inclusion of the culture of good governance in educational curricula.		
A.2.4.i	Entrust ASEAN Law Ministers Meeting (ALAWMM), with the cooperation of other Sectoral Bodies and Entities associated with ASEAN, including the ASEAN Law Association (ALA), to develop cooperation programmes to strengthen the rule of law, judicial systems and legal infrastructure.	A.1.3.i	Entrust ASEAN Law Ministers Meeting (ALAWMM), with the cooperation of other sectoral bodies and entities associated with ASEAN including ASEAN Law Association (ALA) to develop cooperation programmes to strengthen the rule of law, judicial systems, and legal infrastructure.
A.2.4.iv	Enhance access to legal assistance in ASEAN Member States to promote social justice through more public education and outreach activities.		
A.2.4.vi	Promote the development of university curricula on legal systems of individual ASEAN Member State and legal instruments pertaining to the ASEAN Community.	A.1.3.iii	Develop a university curriculum on the legal systems of ASEAN Member States by the ASEAN University Network (AUN) by 2010.
A.2.6.iii	Promote research and scholarly publications by ASEAN think-tanks and academic institutions on regional and international developments.	A.1.6.ii	Promote research studies and scholarly publications on ASEAN political development initiatives.

B.1.3.iii	Enhance the role of the Secretary-General of ASEAN in the ARF, including further strengthening the ARF Unit in the ASEAN Secretariat.	B.1.3.vi	Enhance the role of the Secretary-General of ASEAN in the ARF including further strengthening the ARF Unit in the ASEAN Secretariat.
B.2.iii	Activate the ASEAN Troika to address urgent situations affecting regional peace and stability in timely manner.		
B.3.1.ii	Consider the accession of third countries to the MLAT 2004.		
B.4.6.ii	Promote public participation in the development of cooperation in post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation, including the encouragement of comprehensive input to academia, media, non-governmental organisations, civil society, and community groups.	B.3.3.ii	Promote public participation in the development of cooperation in post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation including the encouragement of comprehensive input of academia, media, non-governmental organisations, civil society and community groups.
B.6.3.iv	Enhance dialogue and cooperation with relevant international organisations, such as the UN, the International Maritime Organization and the International Labour Organization to ensure effective implementation of conventions and instruments related to maritime cooperation, including, but not limited to, safety of life at sea, the welfare of seafarers, and prevention of pollution from ships.*		

\* It is noted that maritime co-operation between ASEAN Member States and the IMO is already ongoing under the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Pillar. Specifically, the ASEAN Maritime Transport Working Group, which has two standing agenda items on this area of cooperation: (i) 'IMO-ASEAN Partnership' that discusses implementation of IMO activities, and (ii) 'Convene regional workshops / seminars to support implementation or ratification of IMO Conventions by ASEAN Member States' under the Kuala Lumpur Strategic Transport Plan for 2016-2025 (KLSTP).

## Annex E: Table of Indicative List of ASEAN Cross-Pillar Issues and Lead Sectoral Body / Lead Shepherd

Issue ID No.	Issues	Lead Sectoral Body/ Lead Shepherd from: (green highlight = confirmed Lead Sectoral Body)		
		APSC	AEC	ASCC
1	Trafficking in Persons and People Smuggling	SOMTC*		
2	Maritime security and cooperation	SOM		
3	Counter-terrorism	SOMTC		
4	Cybersecurity and Cybercrime			
5	Peacekeeping and Post-conflict peacebuilding			
6	Human Rights	AICHR		
7	Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief			ACDM
8	Illicit Drugs	ASOD		
9	Pharmaceuticals		ACCSQ	
10	Environmental Crime			
11	Money Laundering and International Economic Crime			
12	Nuclear Safety and Nuclear Security	ASEANTOM		
13	Border Management	DGICM		
14	Climate Change			
15	Good Governance			ACCSM
16	Sustainable Tourism		ASEAN NTOs	
17	Skilled Labour, Skills Development and Skill Recognition			SLOM and SOM-ED as co-leads
18	Inclusive Employment			SLOM

19	Entrepreneurship and Women's Economic Empowerment			ACW
20	Small and Medium Enterprises		ACCMSME	
21	Food Security		SOM-AMAF	
22	Education in Science and Technology			
23	Sustainable Development Cooperation			
24	Social Protection			SOMSWD
25	ASEAN Awareness and Identity			SOMRI
26	Strengthening Coordination among the ASEAN Community Pillars			
27	Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)			
28	Productive, Healthy, and Active Ageing			SOMSWD
29	Anti-Corruption			ACCSM
30	Connectivity	ASEAN Coordinating Committee on Connectivity		
31	Innovation		COSTI	
32	Food Safety		PFPWG	
33	Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)		HLTF-EI**	
34	Culture of Prevention			WG-COP
35	New Free Trade Agreements (FTA) Issues		HLTF-EI or as otherwise designated by the HLTF-EI	
36	ASEAN Enabling Master Plan 2025: Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disability			SOMSWD
37	Gender Mainstreaming			ACW
38	Marine Debris			

\* SOMTC agreed to lead "Trafficking in Persons" issue only.

\*\* HLTF EI has been spearheading the work on the 4IR starting with the readiness assessment in 2018, followed by initiating cross-pillar dialogue. ASEAN is now in the process of developing a consolidated strategy for the 4IR. The strategy is expected to include recommendations on appropriate institutional mechanisms addressing 4IR issues in ASEAN. Lead sectoral body(ies) can be confirmed following the finalisation of the consolidated strategy.

**Abbreviations:**

ACCC	ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee
ACCMSME	ASEAN Coordinating Committee on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
ACCSM	Heads of Civil Service Meeting for the ASEAN Cooperation on Civil Service Matters
ACCSQ	ASEAN Consultative Committee on Standards and Quality
ACCWG	ASEAN Coordinating Council Working Group
ACDM	ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management
ACW	ASEAN Committee on Women
AFMM	ASEAN Finance Ministers' Meeting
AICHR	ASEAN Inter-governmental Commission on Human Rights
AMM	ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting
AMMTC	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime
ASCC Council	ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Council
ASCCO	Coordinating Conference for ASEAN Political-Security Community
ASEAN NTOs	ASEAN National Tourism Organisations
ASEANTOM	ASEAN Network of Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy
ASOD	ASEAN Senior Officials on Drug Matters
ASOEN	ASEAN Senior Officials on Environment
AWGCC	ASEAN Working Group on Climate Change
COSTI	Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation
DGICM	Directors-General of Immigration Department and Heads of Consular Affairs Division of Ministries of Foreign Affairs Meeting
HLTF-EI	High Level Task Force on Economic Integration
JCM	Joint Consultative Meeting
PFPWG	Prepared Foodstuff Product Working Group
SEOM	Senior Economic Officials' Meeting
SLOM	Senior Labour Officials' Meeting
SOCA	Senior Officials Committee for ASEAN Socio-Cultural Committee
SOC-COM	Coordinating Conference on the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community
SOM	Senior Officials' Meeting
SOM-ED	Senior Officials' Meeting on Education
SOMRI	Senior Officials' Meeting Responsible for Information
SOMSWD	Senior Officials' Meeting on Social Welfare and Development
SOMTC	Senior Officials' Meeting on Transnational Crime
SOMY	Senior Officials' Meeting on Youth
TF AFSRF	Task Force on Development of Instrument for the Implementation of the ASEAN Food Safety Regulatory Framework
WG-COP	Working Group on Culture of Prevention