**ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS**

1. **HISTORY**

**THE FOUNDING OF ASEAN**

On 8 August 1967, five leaders – the Foreign Ministers of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand – sat down together in the main hall of the Department of Foreign Affairs building in Bangkok, Thailand and signed a document. By virtue of that document, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was born. The five Foreign Ministers who signed it – Adam Malik of Indonesia, Narciso R. Ramos of the Philippines, Tun Abdul Razak of Malaysia, S. Rajaratnam of Singapore, and Thanat Khoman of Thailand – would subsequently be hailed as the Founding Fathers of probably the most successful inter-governmental organization in the developing world today. And the document that they signed would be known as the ASEAN Declaration.

It was a short, simply-worded document containing just five articles. It declared the establishment of an Association for Regional Cooperation among the Countries of Southeast Asia to be known as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and spelled out the aims and purposes of that Association. These aims and purposes were about cooperation in the economic, social, cultural, technical, educational and other fields, and in the promotion of regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice and the rule of law and adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter. It stipulated that the Association would be open for participation by all States in the Southeast Asian region subscribing to its aims, principles and purposes. It proclaimed ASEAN as representing “the collective will of the nations of Southeast Asia to bind themselves together in friendship and cooperation and, through joint efforts and sacrifices, secure for their peoples and for posterity the blessings of peace, freedom and prosperity.”

It was while Thailand was brokering reconciliation among Indonesia, the Philippines and Malaysia over certain disputes that it dawned on the four countries that the moment for regional cooperation had come or the future of the region would remain uncertain. Recalls one of the two surviving protagonists of that historic process, Thanat Khoman of Thailand: “At the banquet marking the reconciliation between the three disputants, I broached the idea of forming another organization for regional cooperation with Adam Malik. Malik agreed without hesitation but asked for time to talk with his government and also to normalize relations with Malaysia now that the confrontation was over. Meanwhile, the Thai Foreign Office prepared a draft charter of the new institution. Within a few months, everything was ready. I therefore invited the two former members of the Association for Southeast Asia (ASA), Malaysia and the Philippines, and Indonesia, a key member, to a meeting in Bangkok. In addition, Singapore sent S. Rajaratnam, then Foreign Minister, to see me about joining the new set-up. Although the new organization was planned to comprise only the ASA members plus Indonesia, Singapore’s request was favorably considered.”

And so in early August 1967, the five Foreign Ministers spent four days in the relative isolation of a beach resort in Bang Saen, a coastal town less than a hundred kilometers southeast of Bangkok. There they negotiated over that document in a decidedly informal manner which they would later delight in describing as “sports-shirt diplomacy.” Yet it was by no means an easy process: each man brought into the deliberations a historical and political perspective that had no resemblance to that of any of the others. But with goodwill and good humor, as often as they huddled at the negotiating table, they finessed their way through their differences as they lined up their shots on the golf course and traded wisecracks on one another’s game, a style of deliberation which would eventually become the ASEAN ministerial tradition.

Now, with the rigors of negotiations and the informalities of Bang Saen behind them, with their signatures neatly attached to the ASEAN Declaration, also known as the Bangkok Declaration, it was time for some formalities. The first to speak was the Philippine Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Narciso Ramos, a one-time journalist and long-time legislator who had given up a chance to be Speaker of the Philippine Congress to serve as one of his country’s first diplomats. He was then 66 years old and his only son, the future President Fidel V. Ramos, was serving with the Philippine Civic Action Group in embattled Vietnam. He recalled the tediousness of the negotiations that preceded the signing of the Declaration that “truly taxed the goodwill, the imagination, the patience and understanding of the five participating Ministers.” That ASEAN was established at all in spite of these difficulties, he said, meant that its foundations had been solidly laid. And he impressed it on the audience of diplomats, officials and media people who had witnessed the signing ceremony that a great sense of urgency had prompted the Ministers to go through all that trouble. He spoke darkly of the forces that were arrayed against the survival of the countries of Southeast Asia in those uncertain and critical times.

“The fragmented economies of Southeast Asia,” he said, “(with) each country pursuing its own limited objectives and dissipating its meager resources in the overlapping or even conflicting endeavors of sister states carry the seeds of weakness in their incapacity for growth and their self-perpetuating dependence on the advanced, industrial nations. ASEAN, therefore, could marshal the still untapped potentials of this rich region through more substantial united action.”

When it was his turn to speak, Adam Malik, Presidium Minister for Political Affairs and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, recalled that about a year before, in Bangkok, at the conclusion of the peace talks between Indonesia and Malaysia, he had explored the idea of an organization such as ASEAN with his Malaysian and Thai counterparts. One of the “angry young men” in his country’s struggle for independence two decades earlier, Adam Malik was then 50 years old and one of a Presidium of five led by then General Soeharto that was steering Indonesia from the verge of economic and political chaos. He was the Presidium’s point man in Indonesia’s efforts to mend fences with its neighbors in the wake of an unfortunate policy of confrontation. During the past year, he said, the Ministers had all worked together toward the realization of the ASEAN idea, “making haste slowly, in order to build a new association for regional cooperation.”

Adam Malik went on to describe Indonesia’s vision of a Southeast Asia developing into “a region which can stand on its own feet, strong enough to defend itself against any negative influence from outside the region.” Such a vision, he stressed, was not wishful thinking, if the countries of the region effectively cooperated with each other, considering their combined natural resources and manpower. He referred to differences of outlook among the member countries, but those differences, he said, would be overcome through a maximum of goodwill and understanding, faith and realism. Hard work, patience and perseverance, he added, would also be necessary.

The countries of Southeast Asia should also be willing to take responsibility for whatever happens to them, according to Tun Abdul Razak, the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, who spoke next. In his speech, he conjured a vision of an ASEAN that would include all the countries of Southeast Asia. Tun Abdul Razak was then concurrently his country’s Minister of Defence and Minister of National Development. It was a time when national survival was the overriding thrust of Malaysia’s relations with other nations and so as Minister of Defence, he was in charge of his country’s foreign affairs. He stressed that the countries of the region should recognize that unless they assumed their common responsibility to shape their own destiny and to prevent external intervention and interference, Southeast Asia would remain fraught with danger and tension. And unless they took decisive and collective action to prevent the eruption of intra-regional conflicts, the nations of Southeast Asia would remain susceptible to manipulation, one against another.

“We the nations and peoples of Southeast Asia,” Tun Abdul Razak said, “must get together and form by ourselves a new perspective and a new framework for our region. It is important that individually and jointly we should create a deep awareness that we cannot survive for long as independent but isolated peoples unless we also think and act together and unless we prove by deeds that we belong to a family of Southeast Asian nations bound together by ties of friendship and goodwill and imbued with our own ideals and aspirations and determined to shape our own destiny”. He added that, “with the establishment of ASEAN, we have taken a firm and a bold step on that road”.

For his part, S. Rajaratnam, a former Minister of Culture of multi-cultural Singapore who, at that time, served as its first Foreign Minister, noted that two decades of nationalist fervor had not fulfilled the expectations of the people of Southeast Asia for better living standards. If ASEAN would succeed, he said, then its members would have to marry national thinking with regional thinking.

“We must now think at two levels,” Rajaratnam said. “We must think not only of our national interests but posit them against regional interests: that is a new way of thinking about our problems. And these are two different things and sometimes they can conflict. Secondly, we must also accept the fact, if we are really serious about it, that regional existence means painful adjustments to those practices and thinking in our respective countries. We must make these painful and difficult adjustments. If we are not going to do that, then regionalism remains a utopia.”

S. Rajaratnam expressed the fear, however, that ASEAN would be misunderstood. “We are not against anything”, he said, “not against anybody”. And here he used a term that would have an ominous ring even today: balkanization. In Southeast Asia, as in Europe and any part of the world, he said, outside powers had a vested interest in the balkanization of the region. “We want to ensure,” he said, “a stable Southeast Asia, not a balkanized Southeast Asia. And those countries who are interested, genuinely interested, in the stability of Southeast Asia, the prosperity of Southeast Asia, and better economic and social conditions, will welcome small countries getting together to pool their collective resources and their collective wisdom to contribute to the peace of the world.”

The goal of ASEAN, then, is to create, not to destroy. This, the Foreign Minister of Thailand, Thanat Khoman, stressed when it was his turn to speak. At a time when the Vietnam conflict was raging and American forces seemed forever entrenched in Indochina, he had foreseen their eventual withdrawal from the area and had accordingly applied himself to adjusting Thailand’s foreign policy to a reality that would only become apparent more than half a decade later. He must have had that in mind when, on that occasion, he said that the countries of Southeast Asia had no choice but to adjust to the exigencies of the time, to move toward closer cooperation and even integration. Elaborating on ASEAN objectives, he spoke of “building a new society that will be responsive to the needs of our time and efficiently equipped to bring about, for the enjoyment and the material as well as spiritual advancement of our peoples, conditions of stability and progress. Particularly what millions of men and women in our part of the world want is to erase the old and obsolete concept of domination and subjection of the past and replace it with the new spirit of give and take, of equality and partnership. More than anything else, they want to be master of their own house and to enjoy the inherent right to decide their own destiny …”

While the nations of Southeast Asia prevent attempts to deprive them of their freedom and sovereignty, he said, they must first free themselves from the material impediments of ignorance, disease and hunger. Each of these nations cannot accomplish that alone, but by joining together and cooperating with those who have the same aspirations, these objectives become easier to attain. Then Thanat Khoman concluded: “What we have decided today is only a small beginning of what we hope will be a long and continuous sequence of accomplishments of which we ourselves, those who will join us later and the generations to come, can be proud. Let it be for Southeast Asia, a potentially rich region, rich in history, in spiritual as well as material resources and indeed for the whole ancient continent of Asia, the light of happiness and well-being that will shine over the uncounted millions of our struggling peoples.”

The Foreign Minister of Thailand closed the inaugural session of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations by presenting each of his colleagues with a memento. Inscribed on the memento presented to the Foreign Minister of Indonesia, was the citation, “In recognition of services rendered by His Excellency Adam Malik to the ASEAN organization, the name of which was suggested by him.”

And that was how ASEAN was conceived, given a name, and born. It had been barely 14 months since Thanat Khoman brought up the ASEAN idea in his conversations with his Malaysian and Indonesian colleagues. In about three more weeks, Indonesia would fully restore diplomatic relations with Malaysia, and soon after that with Singapore. That was by no means the end to intra-ASEAN disputes, for soon the Philippines and Malaysia would have a falling out on the issue of sovereignty over Sabah. Many disputes between ASEAN countries persist to this day. But all Member Countries are deeply committed to resolving their differences through peaceful means and in the spirit of mutual accommodation. Every dispute would have its proper season but it would not be allowed to get in the way of the task at hand. And at that time, the essential task was to lay the framework of regional dialogue and cooperation.

The two-page Bangkok Declaration not only contains the rationale for the establishment of ASEAN and its specific objectives. It represents the organization’s modus operandi of building on small steps, voluntary, and informal arrangements towards more binding and institutionalized agreements. All the founding member states and the newer members have stood fast to the spirit of the Bangkok Declaration. Over the years, ASEAN has progressively entered into several formal and legally-binding instruments, such as the 1976 Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia and the 1995 Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone.

Against the backdrop of conflict in the then Indochina, the Founding Fathers had the foresight of building a community of and for all Southeast Asian states. Thus the Bangkok Declaration promulgated that “the Association is open for participation to all States in the Southeast Asian region subscribing to the aforementioned aims, principles and purposes.” ASEAN’s inclusive outlook has paved the way for community-building not only in Southeast Asia, but also in the broader Asia Pacific region where several other inter-governmental organizations now co-exist.

The original ASEAN logo presented five brown sheaves of rice stalks, one for each founding member. Beneath the sheaves is the legend “ASEAN” in blue. These are set on a field of yellow encircled by a blue border. Brown stands for strength and stability, yellow for prosperity and blue for the spirit of cordiality in which ASEAN affairs are conducted. When ASEAN celebrated its 30th Anniversary in 1997, the sheaves on the logo had increased to ten – representing all ten countries of Southeast Asia and reflecting the colors of the flags of all of them. In a very real sense, ASEAN and Southeast Asia would then be one and the same, just as the Founding Fathers had envisioned.

This article is based on the first chapter of ASEAN at 30, a publication of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in commemoration of its 30th Anniversary on 8 August 1997, written by Jamil Maidan Flores and Jun Abad.

1. **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ASEAN CHARTER**

With the entry into force of the ASEAN Charter on 15 December 2008, ASEAN will henceforth operate under a new legal framework and establish a number of new organs to boost its community-building process.

The ASEAN Charter has been fully ratified (or accepted in Member States without Parliament or when such ratification cane be done through a Cabinet decision) in all the 10 ASEAN Member States. Singapore was the first to deposit its instrument of ratification with the Secretary-General of ASEAN, on 7 January 2008; Thailand was the last, on 15 November 2008.

In effect, the ASEAN Charter has become a legally binding agreement among the 10 ASEAN Member States. It will also be registered with the Secretariat of the United Nations, pursuant to Article 102, Paragraph 1

of the Charter of the United Nations.

The importance of the ASEAN Charter can be seen in the following contexts:

* New political commitment at the top level
* New and enhanced commitments
* New legal framework, legal personality
* New ASEAN bodies
* Two new openly-recruited DSGs
* More ASEAN meetings
* More roles of ASEAN Foreign Ministers
* New and enhanced role of the SecretaryGeneral of ASEAN
* Other new initiatives and changes
* What remains unchanged?New political commitment at the top level
* To unite under One Vision, One Identity and One Caring and Sharing Community
* To build the ASEAN Community comprising:

1. ASEAN Political-SecurityCommunity
2. ASEAN Economic Community
3. ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community

**New and enhanced commitments**

 Political

* Mutual interests and interdependence among ASEAN peoples; common
* objectives and shared destiny
* “Member States shall take all necessary measures, including the enactment of appropriate domestic legislation, to effectively implement the provisions of this
* Charter and to comply with all obligations of membership;” (Article 5.2)
* Principles of democracy, the rule of law, and good governance
* Respect for and protection and promotion of human rights
* Peace-oriented values
* Nuclear weapon-free Southeast Asia, and free of all other weapons of mass destruction
* “shared commitment and collective responsibility in enhancing regional peace, security and prosperity” (Article 2.2 (b))
* “enhanced consultations on matters seriously affecting the common interest of ASEAN;” (Article 2.2 (g))

Economic

* Rules-based economic integration; market economy
* Adherence to multilateral trade rules and ASEAN’s rules-based regimes
* Progress reduction towards elimination of all barriers to regional economic integration

People-oriented

* “We, THE PEOPLES of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), …” (Preamble)
* At least 10 of the 15 “purposes” of ASEAN are directly related to the peoples of ASEAN (See Article 1.4, and 1.6 – 14)
* Peoples at the centre of the ASEAN community-building process
* “To promote a people-oriented ASEAN in which all sectors of society are encouraged to participate in, and benefit from, the process of ASEAN integration and community building;” (Article 1.13)
* Common values in the spirit of unity in diversity
* Chapter V: Entities Associated with ASEAN provides for enhanced ASEAN’s engagement with these entities

**New legal framework, legal personality**

* The ASEAN Charter is a legally-binding international (intra-ASEAN) agreement
* All the Governments of the 10 Member States of ASEAN have ratified/accepted it
* All the 10 ASEAN Governments have deposited their instruments of ratification/acceptance with the Secretary-General of ASEAN
* Singapore was the first to deposit on 7 January 2008; Thailand was the last on 15 November 2008
* The ASEAN Charter is due to enter into force on 15 December 2008, in accordance with its Article 47.4
* The ASEAN Charter shall be registered with the Secretariat of the UN
* Article 3 states: “ASEAN, as an intergovernmental organisation, is hereby  
  conferred legal personality.”

A High Level Legal Experts Group (HLEG), appointed at the 41st AMM in Singapore, consisting of 10 senior legal experts, one each from every Member State, is looking into all legal issues arising from the Charter.

HLEG is chaired by H.E. Vasin Teeravechyan, former Ambassador of Thailand to the Republic of Korea, and former Director-General of the Treaty and Legal Affairs Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand. HLEG is addressing three key issue areas: (1) legal personality of ASEAN (2) dispute settlement (3) privileges and immunities.

**New ASEAN bodies to be established**

* ASEAN Coordinating Council (ACC), consisting of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers
* Three Community Councils
* Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN
* ASEAN human rights body

**Two new openly-recruited DSGs**

* Two additional Deputy Secretaries-General (DSGs) will be openly recruited: one for the ASEAN Economic Community, another for the Community and Corporate Affairs. Each will serve a three-year term, which may be renewed for another three years
* Two other DSGs will continue to be appointed from national nominations,  
  based on alphabetical rotation. The two incumbents are H.E. Nicholas T. Dammen from Indonesia, and H.E. Dr. Soeung Rathchavy from Cambodia. They will be succeeded next year by DSGs from Lao PDR and Malaysia respectively. Each of these two DSGs shall serve a 3-year nonrenewable term
* The posts of these four DSGs and the post of the Secretary-General of ASEAN shall be held by ASEAN nationals from five different Member States, in accordance with Article 11.5

* ASEAN Summit of the Heads of State/Government shall be held twice  
  annually
* Special ASEAN Summit may be held when necessary, and it can be convened outside the ASEAN region; (a Special ASEAN Summit was, for example, held in Beijing on 23 October 2008 on the sidelines of the 7th ASEM)
* ASEAN Coordinating Council, and the three Community Councils to meet at least twice a year; they shall be supported by relevant senior officials
* The Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN is expected to  
  meet regularly at the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta

**More roles of ASEAN Foreign Ministers**

The annual ASEAN Ministerial Meeting of Foreign Ministers (AMM) will be renamed as the ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting; its abbreviation will stay as the AMM

1. **ASEAN SUMMIT**

The ASEAN Summit is the highest policy-making body in ASEAN comprising the Heads of State or Government of ASEAN Member States. As per regular practice, the ASEAN Summit Meetings shall be held twice annually at a time to be determined by the Chair of the ASEAN Summit in consultation with other ASEAN Member States, to be hosted by the ASEAN Member State holding the ASEAN Chairmanship. The First ASEAN Summit was held in Bali, Indonesia on 23-24 February 1976.

1. **ASEAN COORDINATING COUNCIL**

**About ASEAN**

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN, was established on 8 August 1967 in Bangkok, Thailand, with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration) by the Founding Fathers of ASEAN: Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. Brunei Darussalam joined ASEAN on 7 January 1984, followed by Viet Nam on 28 July 1995, Lao PDR and Myanmar on 23 July 1997, and Cambodia on 30 April 1999, making up what is today the ten Member States of ASEAN.

Aside from the ASEAN Charter, the ACC is guided by the Rules of Procedure for the ASEAN Coordinating Council, which was adopted by the 5th Meeting of ACC on 22 October 2009 in Cha-am Hua Hin, Thailand.

Based on the stipulations in the ASEAN Charter, issues which may be discussed by the ACC include, but are not limited to, ASEAN’s key deliverables during a specific chairmanship year, and any other emerging issues which are of priority to ASEAN, especially those which cut across the three ASEAN Community Pillars. For example, in 2020, the ACC played a prominent role in the discussions on ASEAN’s direction towards collective efforts in responding to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). The priority areas for the ACC’s deliberations may also be assigned by the ASEAN Summit.

The ACC is responsible in overseeing the development and implementation of documents as assigned by the ASEAN Leaders. The documents shall seek cross-pillar input and concurrence from the three ASEAN Community Councils, namely the APSC Council, AEC Council, and ASCC Council prior to submission to the ASEAN Leaders for endorsement at the ASEAN Summit.

The key ASEAN bodies which report to the ACC include: (i) the Joint Consultative Meeting (JCM); (ii) the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR); (iii) the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC); (iv) the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Task Force; (v) the ASEAN Coordinating Council Working Group (ACCWG) on Timor-Leste’s Application for ASEAN Membership; and (v) the ASEAN Coordinating Council Working Group on Public Health Emergencies (ACCWG-PHE).

**Composition of the ASEAN Coordinating Council**

As of August 2022

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| **THE HON. DATO ERYWAN PEHIN YUSOF**  Second Minister of Foreign Affairs  Jalan Subok  Bandar Seri Begawan BD 2710  **Brunei Darussalam** | **H.E. SALEUMXAY KOMMASITH**  Minister of Foreign Affairs  Ministry of Foreign Affairs  23 Singha Road, Vientiane, 01004  **Lao People’s Democratic Republic** |
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| **H.E. DAW AUNG SAN SUU KYI**  State Counsellor and Union Minister of  Foreign Affairs  Ministry of Foreign Affairs  Nay Pyi Taw,  **Republic of the Union of Myanmar** | **H.E. ENRIQUE A. MANALO**  Secretary of Foreign Affairs  Department of Foreign Affairs  2330 Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City  **Republic of the Philippines** |
| **H.E. DR VIVIAN BALAKRISHNAN**  Minister for Foreign Affairs  Ministry of Foreign Affairs  Tanglin, Singapore 248163  **Republic of Singapore** | **H.E. BUI THANH SON**  Minister of Foreign Affairs  Ministry of Foreign Affairs  No.1 Ton That Dam, Ba Dinh, Hanoi,  **Socialist Republic of Viet Nam** |
| **H.E. DON PRAMUDWINAI**  Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of  Foreign Affairs  Ministry of Foreign Affairs  443 Sri Ayudha Rd. Rajthevi District  Bangkok 10400  **Kingdom of Thailand** |  |

1. **ASEAN COMMUNITY COUNCILS**

1. APSC Council

The ASEAN Community Councils comprise Council of all the three pillars of ASEAN. Under their purview is the relevant ASEAN Sectoral Ministerial Bodies.

The APSC Council comprises members of ministerial rank as designated by the respective ASEAN Member States. In practice, almost all ASEAN Member States is represented by their respective Foreign Ministers, with the exception of Indonesia, which is collectively represented by its Foreign Minister and its Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal, and Security Affairs. Since its first meeting in 2009, the Council is hosted by the Member State holding the ASEAN Chairmanship to meet twice a year in conjunction with the ASEAN Summit. The APSC Council is responsible for the overall implementation of the APSC Blueprint; coordinate efforts among all sectoral bodies under its purview, or on issues which cut across the other Community Councils. The APSC Council also submits reports or recommendations to the ASEAN Summit on matters under his purview. In general, the progress of implementation of the APSC Blueprint shall be reported annually by the Secretary-General of ASEAN to the annual ASEAN Summit, through the APSC Council.

2. AEC Council

As stipulated in Article 9 of the ASEAN Charter, the ASEAN Community Councils shall comprise the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) Council, ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Council, and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Council. The AEC Council shall contribute to the realisation of the ASEAN Community Vision through the fulfilment of the objective of the ASEAN Community Pillar.

To realise the objective of the AEC, the AEC Council shall:

* Ensure the implementation of AEC-relevant decisions of the ASEAN Summit;
* Coordinate the work of the AEC Sectoral Bodies, and on issues that cut across the other Community Councils; and
* Submit reports and recommendations to the ASEAN Summit on matters related to the AEC.

In line with the AEC Blueprint 2025, the AEC Council is the principal body accountable for the overall implementation of the strategic measures in the Blueprint, by monitoring and enforcing the compliance of all measures agreed in the document. In particular, the AEC Council shall ensure the achievement of AEC objectives and targets within the stipulated time frame as espoused in the AEC Blueprint and other key agreements related to the AEC. In doing so, the AEC Council shall work towards the deepening and broadening ASEAN economic integration and regional growth and development. In addition, the AEC Council shall also work towards strengthening ASEAN Economic Community in order to collectively and effectively respond to global economic challenges.

The ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Council has under its purview AEC Sectoral Ministerial Bodies. Its membership comprises designated Ministers in charge of economic-related affairs, and is chaired by the appropriate Minister from the ASEAN Member State that holds the ASEAN Chairmanship.

In overseeing the activities of all the relevant Sectoral Ministerial Bodies under its purview, the AEC Council is assisted by the relevant senior economic officials and the ASEAN Secretariat. Working with the relevant senior economic officials, the ASEAN Secretariat monitors, coordinate, and regularly consults with relevant Sectoral Ministerial Bodies under the AEC on the progress and decisions of the AEC Council and the implementation of measures under the AEC Blueprint.

The AEC Council submits its reports and recommendations to the ASEAN Summit through the ASEAN Coordinating Council. It meets at least twice a year at a time to be determined by the Council Chairman in consultation with all Council Members.

3. ASCC Council

The ASEAN Charter provides for the establishment of ASEAN Community Councils which shall comprise the ASEAN Political Security Community (APSC) Council, ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Council, and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Council.

Article 9 of the ASEAN Charter, stated that the ASCC Council shall contribute to the realisation of the ASEAN Community Vision through the fulfilment of the objectives of the Socio-Cultural Community Pillar.

The ASCC Council shall work towards an ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community that engages and benefits the people, and is inclusive, sustainable, resilient and dynamic.

The ASCC Council shall comprise Members of Ministerial rank as designated by the respective ASEAN Member States. The ASCC Council is chaired by the Council Member from the Member State holding the ASEAN Chairmanship. In the absence of the Council Chairman, the Member State holding the ASEAN Chairmanship shall designate an alternate Ministerial rank person to serve as the Council Chairman.

The ASCC Council shall oversee and coordinate the activities of all the relevant Sectoral Ministerial Bodies under its purview. The Council may, if necessary, establish committees to undertake specific assignments. Such committees shall be chaired by representatives of the Member State holding the ASEAN Chairmanship.

The ASCC Council shall meet twice a year at a time to be determined by the Council Chairman in consultation with all Council Members. The ASCC Council shall submit its reports and recommendations to the ASEAN Summit through the ASEAN Coordinating Council.

**VI. ASEAN MEMBER STATES**

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| [[https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/flag_bruneidarussalam.png](https://asean.org/member-states/brunei-darussalam/)](https://asean.org/member-states/brunei-darussalam/)  [**Brunei Darussalam**](https://asean.org/member-states/brunei-darussalam/)  Commencement Date: 7 January 1984 | [[https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/flag_vietnam.png](https://asean.org/member-states/viet-nam/)](https://asean.org/member-states/viet-nam/)  [**Viet Nam**](https://asean.org/member-states/viet-nam/)  Commencement Date: 28 July 1995 | | [[https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/cambodia1-flag.jpg](https://asean.org/member-states/cambodia/)](https://asean.org/member-states/cambodia/)  [**Cambodia**](https://asean.org/member-states/cambodia/)  Commencement Date: 30 April 1999 |
| [[https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/flag_indonesia.png](https://asean.org/member-states/indonesia/)](https://asean.org/member-states/indonesia/)  [**Indonesia**](https://asean.org/member-states/indonesia/)  Commencement Date: 8 August 1967 | | [[https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/flag_thailand.png](https://asean.org/member-states/thailand/)](https://asean.org/member-states/thailand/)  [**Thailand**](https://asean.org/member-states/thailand/)  Commencement Date: 8 August 1967 | [[https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/flag_laodpr.png](https://asean.org/member-states/lao-pdr/)](https://asean.org/member-states/lao-pdr/)  [**Lao PDR**](https://asean.org/member-states/lao-pdr/)  Commencement Date: 23 July 1997 |
| [[https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/flag_malaysia.png](https://asean.org/member-states/malaysia/)](https://asean.org/member-states/malaysia/)  [**Malaysia**](https://asean.org/member-states/malaysia/)  Commencement Date: 8 August 1967 | | [[https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/flag_philippines.png](https://asean.org/member-states/philippines/)](https://asean.org/member-states/philippines/)  [**Philippines**](https://asean.org/member-states/philippines/)  Commencement Date: 8 August 1967 | [[https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/flag_myanmar.png](https://asean.org/member-states/myanmar-2/)](https://asean.org/member-states/myanmar-2/)  [**Myanmar**](https://asean.org/member-states/myanmar-2/)  Commencement Date: 23 July 1997 |
| [[https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/flag_singapore.png](https://asean.org/member-states/singapore/)](https://asean.org/member-states/singapore/)  [**Singapore**](https://asean.org/member-states/singapore/)  Commencement Date: 8 August 1967 | |  |  |

**- ASEAN Motto: “One Vision, One Identity, One Community”  
- ASEAN Day: 8 August is observed as ASEAN Day**

**VII. GUIDELINES ON THE USE OF THE ASEAN FLAG**

* The ASEAN Flag is a symbol of Member States’ unity and support for the principles and endeavours of ASEAN and is a means to promote greater ASEAN awareness and solidarity.
* The ASEAN Flag represents a stable, peaceful, united and dynamic ASEAN. The colours of the Flag – blue, red, white and yellow – represent the main colours of the flags of all the ASEAN Member States.
* The blue represents peace and stability. Red depicts courage and dynamism, white shows purity and yellow symbolises prosperity.
* The stalks of padi in the centre of the Emblem represent the dream of ASEAN’s Founding Fathers for an ASEAN comprising all the countries in Southeast Asia, bound together in friendship and solidarity.
* The circle represents the unity of ASEAN.
* The ASEAN Flag is the reserved copyright of ASEAN.
* The specifications of the ASEAN Flag are annexed.

Dignity of the ASEAN Flag: The ASEAN Flag shall be treated with respect and shall not be subjected to any indignity.

**VIII. GUIDELINES ON THE USE OF THE ASEAN EMBLEM**



* Blue: Pantone 286, Red: Pantone Red 032, Yellow: Pantone Process Yellow
* The ASEAN Emblem shall be the official emblem of ASEAN.
* The ASEAN Emblem represents a stable, peaceful, united and dynamic ASEAN. The colors of the Emblem — blue, red, white and yellow — represent the main colours of the state crests of all the ASEAN Member States.
* The blue represents peace and stability. Red depicts courage and dynamism, white shows purity and yellow symbolises prosperity.
* The stalks of padi in the center of the Emblem represent the dream of ASEAN’s Founding Fathers for an ASEAN comprising all the countries in Southeast Asia, bound together in friendship and solidarity
* The circle represents the unity of ASEAN.
* The ASEAN Emblem is the reserved copyright of ASEAN.

**IX. GUIDELINES ON THE USE OF THE ASEAN ANTHEM**

**https://youtu.be/KODKSNiVd7E**

* The ASEAN Anthem is an expression of ASEAN unity. It also strengthens the sense of ASEAN identity and belonging among the peoples of the region.
* The ASEAN Anthem is titled “THE ASEAN WAY”, with musical composition and lyrics can be downloaded [here](https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/ASEAN-Anthem.zip).
* The ASEAN Anthem is under the copyright of ASEAN with the ASEAN Secretariat as the main body to oversee its proper use.

#### Dignity of ASEAN Anthem

* The ASEAN Anthem shall be used in a proper and dignified manner. When the Anthem is played, the audience shall rise.
* The Anthem shall not be used in whole or in parts for commercial purposes or political propaganda.

#### Use of the ASEAN Anthem

* The use of the ASEAN Anthem is strongly encouraged at ASEAN formal meetings, ceremonies, and related activities, including those with ASEAN Dialogue Partners, Sectoral Dialogue Partners and Development Partners.
* The ASEAN Anthem may be played to commemorate special occasions of ASEAN, such as the anniversary of ASEAN, or in efforts to promote the interests of ASEAN.
* ASEAN Member States are encouraged to translate the ASEAN Anthem into local languages as a way to promote the Anthem and increase ASEAN awareness within their countries.

#### Inquiries on the Use of the ASEAN Anthem

Inquiries concerning the ASEAN Anthem should be addressed to:

Community Relations Division

The ASEAN Secretariat  
70 A, Jl. Sisingamangaraja  
Jakarta 12110  
Indonesia  
Email: [public@asean.org](mailto:public@asean.org)

#### Approval of and Amendments to the Guidelines

* The Guidelines shall be approved by the ASEAN Coordinating Council (ACC).
* Any Member State may propose amendments to the Guidelines, which shall be submitted to the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) for its consideration and agreed upon by consensus. The agreed amendments shall be submitted to the ASEAN Coordinating Council (ACC) for notation, and thereafter come into immediate effect.

**X. GUIDELINES ON THE USE OF THE NAME “ASEAN”**

**A. Scope and Application**

* The Name “ASEAN” refers to the “Association of Southeast Asian Nations”.
* These Guidelines set out the procedure for the request and authorization for the use of the name “ASEAN”.
* These Guidelines shall apply to entities requesting to use the name “ASEAN” and shall not apply to the following:
  + ASEAN Organs under Chapter IV of the ASEAN Charter including their mechanisms, activities and programmes;
  + ASEAN mechanism officially established by ASEAN Member States;
  + Entities belonging to or activities organized by the Governments of ASEAN Member States; and
  + Entities associated with ASEAN in accordance with Article 16 of the ASEAN Charter.

**B. Protection**

* The name “ASEAN” is protected under Article 6ter of the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property, adopted in 1883 and revised in Stockholm in 1967.

**C. Use of the Name “ASEAN”**

* The use of the name “ASEAN” aims to promote ASEAN and its purposes and principles as stipulated in the ASEAN Charter. It shall not be used for political propaganda or for activities that harm the dignity and integrity of ASEAN, and adversely affects ASEAN or ASEAN Member States.
* The request for the use of the name “ASEAN” shall satisfy the following conditions:
  + The entity shall be indigenous to ASEAN;
  + The use of the name “ASEAN” shall be in support of ASEAN purposes and principles as well as for mutual benefit in the context of attaining ASEAN Community 2015 and beyond and shall not have any negative effect on such purposes and principles;
  + The name “ASEAN” shall not be brought into disrepute by its use.

**D. Enquiries and Requests for the Use of the Name “ASEAN”**

* Any enquiry and/or request for the use of the name “ASEAN” shall be submitted in writing to the ASEAN Secretariat at the following address:

Legal Services and Agreements Division

The ASEAN Secretariat  
70A, Jl. Sisingamangaraja  
Jakarta 12110  
Indonesia

E-mail: [LSADirectorate@asean.org](mailto:lsadirectorate@asean.org)

* An entity requesting for the use of the name “ASEAN” will be required to complete the prescribed application form and submit it together with supporting documents as specified in the form.

**E. Authorization and Revocation Process**

* Upon receiving an enquiry and/or request by an entity seeking to use the name “ASEAN”, the ASEAN Secretariat will consider such enquiry and/or request within a reasonable time. Where necessary, the ASEAN Secretariat may, seek further information and clarification from the requesting entity to ensure that the enquiry and/or request will be processed appropriately.
* In considering the request, the ASEAN Secretariat may, if necessary, consult with the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) and/or concerned ASEAN Sectoral Bodies.
* Where the abovementioned conditions and requirements for the request are satisfied, the ASEAN Secretariat may grant the authorization to use the name “ASEAN”. Such authorization shall be on a non-exclusive basis and may be subject to any terms and conditions as may be determined by the ASEAN Secretariat on a case-by-case basis.
* The authorization for the use of the name “ASEAN” cannot be extended or otherwise transferred to any third party.
* The authorization to use the name “ASEAN” does not establish any form of relations or confer any status between ASEAN and the entity to which the authorization has been granted. Such authorization shall not entitle the entity to act on behalf of ASEAN, or to undertake any act to bind ASEAN or create a liability against ASEAN in any manner whatsoever.
* Any ASEAN Member State or the ASEAN Secretariat may suggest the revocation of the use of the name “ASEAN”. The decision on the revocation shall be made by the ASEAN Secretariat in consultation with the CPR, taking into consideration the provisions set forth in these Guidelines.

**F. Amendments to the Guidelines**

Any ASEAN Member State may propose amendments to these Guidelines, which shall be submitted to the CPR for its consideration and agreed upon by consensus. The agreed amendments shall be submitted to the ASEAN Coordinating Council (ACC) for notation, and thereafter come into immediate effect.

**G. Final Clause**

The CPR considered and agreed to these Guidelines at the 18/2013 CPR Meeting on 19 September 2013.

**ASEAN CHAIRMANSHIP**

The Chairmanship of ASEAN shall rotate annually based on the alphabetical order of the English names of Member States. A Member State assuming the Chairmanship shall chair the ASEAN Summit and related summits, the ASEAN Coordinating Council, the three ASEAN Community Councils, relevant ASEAN Sectoral Ministerial Bodies and senior officials, and the Committee of Permanent Representatives – Article 31 of the ASEAN Charter.

The Member State holding the Chairmanship of ASEAN shall actively promote and enhance the interests and well-being of ASEAN, including efforts to build an ASEAN Community through policy initiatives, coordination, consensus and cooperation; ensure the centrality of ASEAN; ensure an effective and timely response to urgent issues or crisis situations affecting ASEAN, including providing its good offices and such other arrangements to immediately address these concerns; represent ASEAN in strengthening and promoting closer relations with external partners; and carry out such other tasks and functions as may be mandated. – Article 32 of the ASEAN Charter.

#### ASEAN Chairmanship Over the Years

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 2024 – Lao PDR**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-2024-lao-pdr/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 2023 – Indonesia**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-2023-indonesia/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 2022 – Cambodia**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-2022-cambodia/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 2021 – Brunei Darussalam**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-2021/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 2020 – Viet Nam**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-2020-viet-nam/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 2019 – Thailand**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-2019-thailand/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 2018 – Singapore**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-2018-singapore/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 2017 – Philippines**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-2017-philippines/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 2016 – Lao PDR**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-2016-lao-pdr/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 2015 – Malaysia**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-2015-malaysia/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 2014 – Myanmar**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-2014-myanmar/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 2013 – Brunei Darussalam**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-2013-brunei-darussalam/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 2012 – Cambodia**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-2012-cambodia/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 2011 – Indonesia**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-2011-indonesia/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 2010 – Viet Nam**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-2010-viet-nam/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 2009 – Thailand**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-2009-thailand/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 2008 – Thailand**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-2008-thailand/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 2007 – Singapore**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-2007-singapore/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 2006 – Philippines**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-2006-philippines/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 2005 – Malaysia**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-2005-malaysia/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 2004 – Lao PDR**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-2004-lao-pdr/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 2003 – Indonesia**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-2003-indonesia/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 2002 – Cambodia**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-2002-cambodia/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 2001 – Brunei Darussalam**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-2001-brunei-darussalam/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 2000 – Singapore**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-2000-singapore/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 1999 – Philippines**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-1999-philippines/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 1998 – Viet Nam**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-1998-viet-nam/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 1997 – Malaysia**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-1997-malaysia/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 1996 – Indonesia**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-1996-indonesia/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 1995 – Thailand**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-1995-thailand/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 1992 – Singapore**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-1992-singapore/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 1987 – Philippines**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-1987-philippines/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 1977 – Malaysia**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-1977-malaysia/)

### [**ASEAN Chairmanship 1976 – Indonesia**](https://asean.org/asean-chairmanship-1976-indonesia/)