



# ASEAN 2025 : FORGING AHEAD TOGETHER



one vision, one identity, one community









# **ASEAN 2025: FORGING AHEAD TOGETHER**

**The ASEAN Secretariat  
Jakarta**

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

For enquiries, contact:

The ASEAN Secretariat  
Public Outreach and Civil Society Division  
70A Jalan Sisingamangaraja  
Jakarta 12110  
Indonesia  
Phone : (62 21) 724-3372, 726-2991  
Fax : (62 21) 739-8234, 724-3504  
E-mail : [public@asean.org](mailto:public@asean.org)

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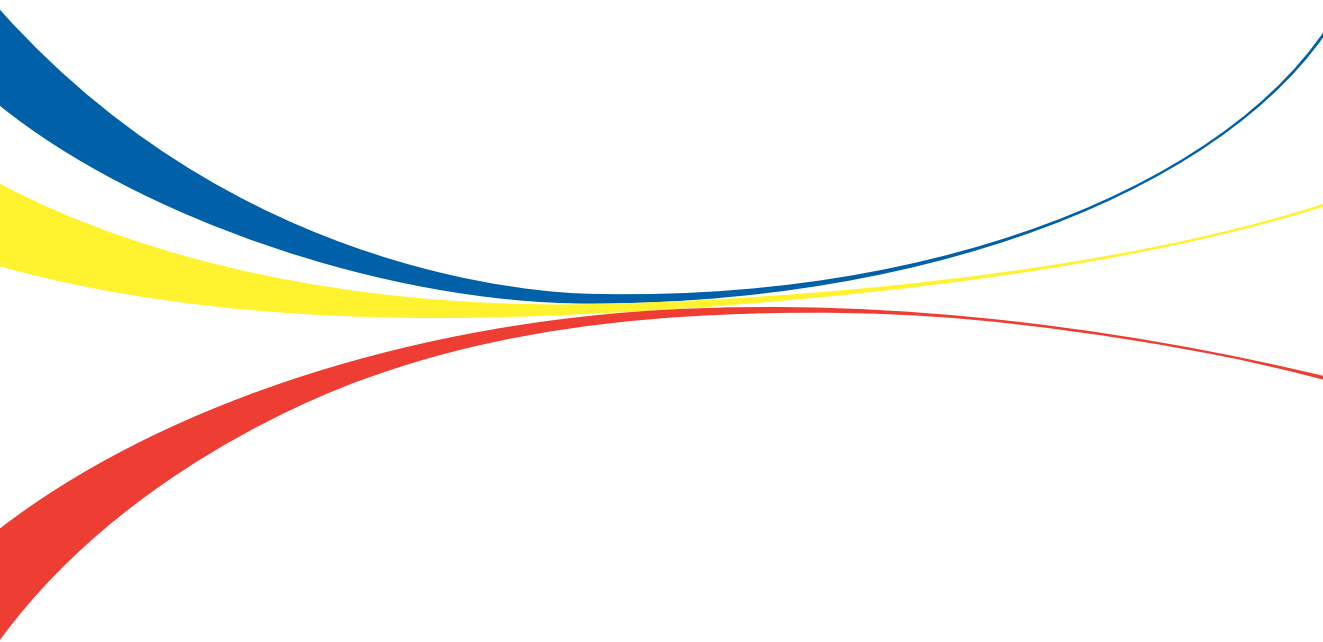
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**KUALA LUMPUR DECLARATION  
ON  
ASEAN 2025: FORGING AHEAD TOGETHER**





## **KUALA LUMPUR DECLARATION ON ASEAN 2025: FORGING AHEAD TOGETHER**

**WE**, the Heads of State/Government of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (hereinafter referred to as ASEAN), namely, Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, on the occasion of the 27<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur;

**RECALLING** the spirit in which the ASEAN Founding Fathers gathered in Bangkok in 1967 to create an organisation that would help bring about a Southeast Asian region of peace, freedom and prosperity for our peoples;

**REAFFIRMING** our commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok, 1967), the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality Declaration (Kuala Lumpur, 1971), the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (Bali, 1976), the Declaration of ASEAN Concord (Bali, 1976), the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (Bangkok, 1995), the ASEAN Vision 2020 (Kuala Lumpur, 1997), the Declaration of ASEAN Concord II (Bali, 2003) and the Bali Declaration on ASEAN Community in a Global Community of Nations (Bali, 2011);

**REAFFIRMING FURTHER** the purposes and principles enshrined in the ASEAN Charter that reflect our desire and collective will to live in a region of lasting peace, security and stability, sustained economic growth, shared prosperity and social progress, as well as promote ASEAN interests, ideals and aspirations;

**RECOGNISING** that the rapidly changing geostrategic landscape continues to present both opportunities and challenges which require ASEAN to respond proactively, in order to remain relevant as well as to maintain ASEAN centrality and role as the primary driving force in the evolving regional architecture;

**COGNISANT** of our commitment made under the Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration on the ASEAN Community's Post-2015 Vision in 2013 and the Nay Pyi Taw Declaration on the ASEAN Community's Post-2015 Vision in 2014 that sets out the future direction for a politically cohesive, economically integrated, socially responsible and a truly rules-based, people-oriented, people-centred ASEAN;

**EMPHASISING** the importance of implementing the Report and Recommendations of the High Level Task Force on Strengthening the ASEAN Secretariat and Reviewing the ASEAN Organs that was endorsed at the 25<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in Nay Pyi Taw;

**RECOGNISING** the benefits realised from the implementation of the Roadmap for an ASEAN Community (2009-2015) comprising the ASEAN Political-Security Community, the ASEAN Economic Community and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprints, as well as the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan II and the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity;

**WELCOMING** the formal establishment of the ASEAN Community 2015 comprising the ASEAN Political-Security Community, the ASEAN Economic Community and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community; and

**COMMENDING** the work of the High Level Task Force on the ASEAN Community's Post-2015 Vision, as well as the work of the High Level Task Force on ASEAN Political-Security Community, the High Level Task Force on ASEAN Economic Integration and the High Level Task Force on ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community, supported by the ASEAN Secretariat, on the three Community Blueprints;

**DO HEREBY:**

1. **ADOPT** the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, the ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint 2025, the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint 2025 and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint 2025;
2. **AGREE** that this Declaration as well as the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, the ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint 2025, the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint 2025 and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint 2025, as annexed, shall constitute the *ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together* ;
3. **DECIDE** that the *ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together* succeeds the Roadmap for an ASEAN Community (2009-2015);
4. **FURTHER DECIDE** that the IAI Work Plan III and the ASEAN Connectivity 2025 to be adopted in 2016 shall be an integral part of the *ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together* ;
5. **RESOLVE** that ASEAN Member States as well as ASEAN Organs and Bodies shall implement the *ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together*, in a timely and effective manner, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the ASEAN Charter;
6. **TASK** the ASEAN Ministers, the Secretary-General of ASEAN as well as other ASEAN Organs and Bodies to mobilise resources from ASEAN Member States and external sources to implement the *ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together* ; and
7. **DIRECT** the Secretary-General of ASEAN to monitor and report the progress of implementation of the *ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together* to the ASEAN Summit annually, through the ASEAN Coordinating Council and respective ASEAN Community Councils.

**DONE** at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, this Twenty Second day of November in the Year Two Thousand and Fifteen, in a single original copy, in the English Language.

For Brunei Darussalam:  
**HAJI HASSANAL BOLKIAH**  
Sultan of Brunei Darussalam

For the Kingdom of Cambodia:  
**SAMDECH AKKA MOHA SENA PADEI TECHO HUN SEN**  
Prime Minister

For the Republic of Indonesia:  
**JOKO WIDODO**  
President

For the Lao People's Democratic Republic:  
**THONGSING THAMMAVONG**  
Prime Minister

For Malaysia:  
**DATO' SRI MOHD NAJIB TUN ABDUL RAZAK**  
Prime Minister

For the Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
**THEIN SEIN**  
President

For the Republic of the Philippines  
**BENIGNO S. AQUINO III**  
President

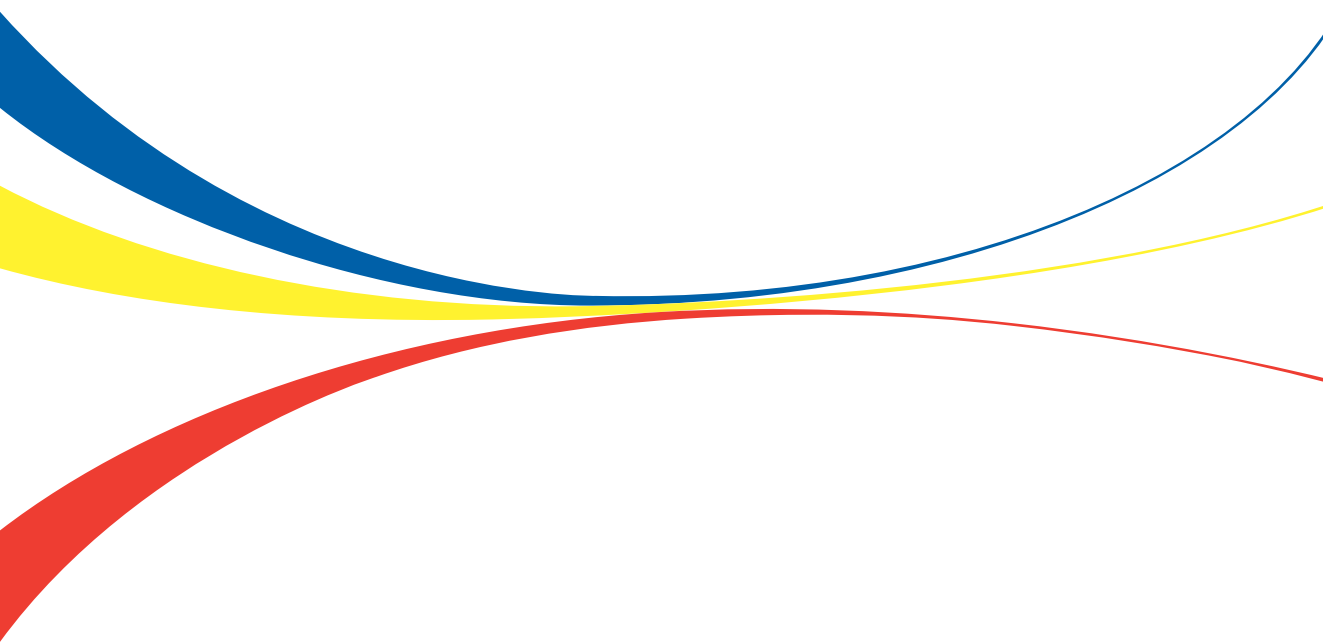
For the Republic of Singapore  
**LEE HSIEN LOONG**  
Prime Minister

For the Kingdom of Thailand:  
**GENERAL PRAYUT CHAN-O-CHA (RET.)**  
Prime Minister

For the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam:  
**NGUYEN TAN DUNG**  
Prime Minister



**ASEAN COMMUNITY  
VISION 2025**







## ASEAN COMMUNITY VISION 2025

1. We, the Heads of State/Government representing the peoples of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (hereinafter referred to as ASEAN), gather here today at the 27<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, to celebrate the formal establishment of the ASEAN Community 2015 and to chart the ASEAN Community Vision 2025.
2. We recall the ASEAN vision of an integrated, peaceful and stable community with shared prosperity built upon the aspirations of and commitment to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, the ASEAN Vision 2020, the Declaration of ASEAN Concord II, the ASEAN Charter, the Roadmap for an ASEAN Community (2009-2015) and the Bali Declaration on ASEAN Community in a Global Community of Nations.
3. We are pleased that the positive progress made since 2009 in implementing the Roadmap for an ASEAN Community comprising the ASEAN Political-Security Community, ASEAN Economic Community and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprints, as well as the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Strategic Framework and the IAI Work Plan II (2009-2015) and the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity has led us to another important milestone in ASEAN development, namely, the formal establishment of the ASEAN Community 2015.
4. We resolve to consolidate our Community, building upon and deepening the integration process to realise a rules-based, people-oriented, people-centred ASEAN Community, where our peoples enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms, higher quality of life and the benefits of community building, reinforcing our sense of togetherness and common identity, guided by the purposes and principles of the ASEAN Charter.
5. We envision a peaceful, stable and resilient Community with enhanced capacity to respond effectively to challenges, and ASEAN as an outward-looking region within a global community of nations, while maintaining ASEAN centrality. We also envision vibrant, sustainable and highly integrated economies, enhanced ASEAN Connectivity as well as strengthened efforts in narrowing the development gap, including through the IAI. We further envision ASEAN empowered with capabilities, to seize opportunities and address challenges in the coming decade.
6. We underline the complementarity of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with ASEAN community building efforts to uplift the standards of living of our peoples.

## **ASEAN Political-Security Community**

7. Our ASEAN Political-Security Community by 2025 shall be a united, inclusive and resilient community. Our peoples shall live in a safe, harmonious and secure environment, embrace the values of tolerance and moderation as well as uphold ASEAN fundamental principles, shared values and norms. ASEAN shall remain cohesive, responsive and relevant in addressing challenges to regional peace and security as well as play a central role in shaping the evolving regional architecture, while deepening our engagement with external parties and contributing collectively to global peace, security and stability.
8. We, therefore, undertake to realise:
  - 8.1. A rules-based community that fully adheres to ASEAN fundamental principles, shared values and norms as well as principles of international law governing the peaceful conduct of relations among states;
  - 8.2. An inclusive and responsive community that ensures our peoples enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as thrive in a just, democratic, harmonious and gender-sensitive environment in accordance with the principles of democracy, good governance and the rule of law;
  - 8.3. A community that embraces tolerance and moderation, fully respects the different religions, cultures and languages of our peoples, upholds common values in the spirit of unity in diversity as well as addresses the threat of violent extremism in all its forms and manifestations;
  - 8.4. A community that adopts a comprehensive approach to security which enhances our capacity to address effectively and in a timely manner existing and emerging challenges, including non-traditional security issues, particularly transnational crimes and transboundary challenges;
  - 8.5. A region that resolves differences and disputes by peaceful means, including refraining from the threat or use of force and adopting peaceful dispute settlement mechanisms while strengthening confidence-building measures, promoting preventive diplomacy activities and conflict resolution initiatives;
  - 8.6. A region that remains free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, as well as contributes to global efforts on disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy;
  - 8.7. A community that enhances maritime security and maritime cooperation for peace and stability in the region and beyond, through ASEAN and ASEAN-led mechanisms and adopts internationally-accepted maritime conventions and principles;

- 8.8. A community that strengthens our unity, cohesiveness and ASEAN centrality as well as remains the primary driving force in shaping the evolving regional architecture that is built upon ASEAN-led mechanisms; and
- 8.9. A community, in the interest of developing friendly and mutually beneficial relations, that deepens cooperation with Dialogue Partners, strengthens engagement with other external parties, reaches out to potential partners, as well as responds collectively and constructively to global developments and issues of common concern.

### **ASEAN Economic Community**

- 9. Our ASEAN Economic Community by 2025 shall be highly integrated and cohesive; competitive, innovative and dynamic; with enhanced connectivity and sectoral cooperation; and a more resilient, inclusive, and people-oriented, people-centred community, integrated with the global economy.
- 10. We, therefore, undertake to achieve:
  - 10.1. A highly integrated and cohesive regional economy that supports sustained high economic growth by increasing trade, investment, and job creation; improving regional capacity to respond to global challenges and mega trends; advancing a single market agenda through enhanced commitments in trade in goods, and through an effective resolution of non-tariff barriers; deeper integration in trade in services; and a more seamless movement of investment, skilled labour, business persons, and capital;
  - 10.2. A competitive, innovative and dynamic community which fosters robust productivity growth including through the creation and practical application of knowledge, supportive policies towards innovation, science-based approach to green technology and development, and by embracing the evolving digital technology; promotion of good governance, transparency and responsive regulations; effective dispute resolution; and a view towards enhanced participation in global value chains;
  - 10.3. Enhanced connectivity and sectoral cooperation with improvements in regional frameworks, including strategic sectoral policies vital to the effective operationalisation of the economic community;
  - 10.4. A resilient, inclusive, people-oriented and people-centred community that engenders equitable development and inclusive growth; a community with enhanced micro, small and medium enterprise development policies and cooperation to narrow the development gaps; and a community with effective business and stakeholder engagement, sub-regional development cooperation and projects, and greater economic opportunities that support poverty eradication; and

- 10.5. A global ASEAN that fosters a more systematic and coherent approach towards its external economic relations; a central and foremost facilitator and driver of regional economic integration in East Asia; and a united ASEAN with an enhanced role and voice in global economic fora in addressing international economic issues.

### **ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community**

11. Our ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community by 2025 shall be one that engages and benefits the peoples, and is inclusive, sustainable, resilient, and dynamic.
12. We, therefore, undertake to realise:
  - 12.1. A committed, participative and socially-responsible community through an accountable and inclusive mechanism for the benefit of our peoples, upheld by the principles of good governance;
  - 12.2. An inclusive community that promotes high quality of life, equitable access to opportunities for all and promotes and protects human rights of women, children, youth, the elderly/older persons, persons with disabilities, migrant workers, and vulnerable and marginalised groups;
  - 12.3. A sustainable community that promotes social development and environmental protection through effective mechanisms to meet the current and future needs of our peoples;
  - 12.4. A resilient community with enhanced capacity and capability to adapt and respond to social and economic vulnerabilities, disasters, climate change as well as emerging threats and challenges; and
  - 12.5. A dynamic and harmonious community that is aware and proud of its identity, culture, and heritage with the strengthened ability to innovate and proactively contribute to the global community.

### **Moving Forward**

13. In order to achieve our ASEAN Community Vision 2025, we shall realise a community with enhanced institutional capacity through improved ASEAN work processes and coordination, increased effectiveness and efficiency in the work of ASEAN Organs and Bodies, including a strengthened ASEAN Secretariat. We shall also realise a community with increased ASEAN institutional presence at the national, regional and international levels.
14. We, therefore, task the ASEAN Community Councils to fully and effectively implement the commitment contained in the *ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together* and to submit their reports to the ASEAN Summit, in accordance with the established procedure.

15. We pledge to our peoples our resolve to realise a rules-based, people-oriented, people-centred ASEAN of “One Vision, One Identity, One Community”.

\* \* \*



**ASEAN POLITICAL-SECURITY COMMUNITY  
BLUEPRINT 2025**







# ASEAN POLITICAL-SECURITY COMMUNITY BLUEPRINT 2025

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) Blueprint (2009-2015) has consolidated more than four decades of ASEAN political-security cooperation in the most comprehensive and concrete manner, with the aim to ensure that the peoples and Member States of ASEAN live in peace with one another and with the world at large in a just, democratic and harmonious environment. This Blueprint has upheld the purpose of preserving regional peace and stability. This Blueprint also adopted a comprehensive approach to security and an outward-looking approach in ASEAN external relations.
2. Seven years of implementation of the APSC Blueprint (2009-2015) has further deepened and expanded ASEAN political and security cooperation as well as strengthened ASEAN capacity in responding to regional and international challenges, cementing the foundation of the APSC by 2015.
3. The APSC Blueprint 2025 is envisaged to build upon the achievements that have been made to elevate ASEAN political and security cooperation to an even higher level. This will ensure a rules-based and inclusive community in which our peoples enjoy human rights, fundamental freedoms and social justice, live in a safe and secure environment with enhanced capacity to respond effectively to emerging challenges and in a dynamic region where ASEAN enhances its centrality in the evolving regional architecture and plays a constructive role globally. In this regard, this Blueprint promotes a people-oriented, people-centred ASEAN in which all sectors of society, regardless of gender, race, religion, language, or social and cultural background, are encouraged to participate in, and benefit from, the process of ASEAN integration and community building.
4. The APSC Blueprint 2025 is guided by the ASEAN Charter as well as other key ASEAN instruments and documents which provide the principles and frameworks for ASEAN political and security cooperation and their implementation. Such implementation is also guided by relevant domestic laws, regulations and policies. Since community building is an on-going process, relevant programmes and activities as contained in the APSC Blueprint (2009-2015) shall continue to be implemented given their enduring significance. This, however, is accompanied with a bold and forward-looking approach to ensure that the APSC Blueprint 2025 is relevant, contemporary and responsive to the challenges of the times.

## **II. CHARACTERISTICS AND ELEMENTS OF ASEAN POLITICAL-SECURITY COMMUNITY BLUEPRINT 2025**

5. The APSC Blueprint 2025 shall comprise the following key characteristics which are inter-related and mutually reinforcing, and shall be pursued in a balanced and holistic manner:
  - 5.1. A rules-based, people-oriented, people-centred community bound by fundamental principles, shared values and norms, in which our peoples enjoy human rights, fundamental freedoms and social justice, embrace the values of tolerance and moderation, and share a strong sense of togetherness, common identity and destiny;
  - 5.2. A resilient community in a peaceful, secure and stable region, with enhanced capacity to respond effectively and in a timely manner to challenges for the common good of ASEAN, in accordance with the principle of comprehensive security;
  - 5.3. An outward-looking community that deepens cooperation with our external parties, upholds and strengthens ASEAN centrality in the evolving regional architecture, and plays a responsible and constructive role globally based on an ASEAN common platform on international issues; and
  - 5.4. A community with strengthened institutional capacity through improved ASEAN work processes and coordination, increased effectiveness and efficiency in the work of ASEAN Organs and Bodies, including a strengthened ASEAN Secretariat, as well as with increased ASEAN institutional presence at the national, regional and international levels.

### **A. RULES-BASED, PEOPLE-ORIENTED, PEOPLE-CENTRED COMMUNITY**

6. ASEAN political-security cooperation is aimed at promoting ASEAN fundamental principles, shared values and norms as well as principles of international law governing peaceful conduct among States, thereby enhancing regional peace and stability. This cooperation is also aimed at strengthening ASEAN unity and cohesiveness to build a more democratic, transparent, just, rules-based and inclusive community that shares the values of tolerance and moderation.
7. The key elements of the rules-based, people-oriented, people centred community are:
  - A.1. Adhere to and promote ASEAN fundamental principles, shared values and norms as well as principles of international law governing the peaceful conduct of relations**

**A.1.1. Implement fully and effectively the ASEAN Charter**

- i. Ensure the effective implementation of all provisions of the ASEAN Charter to enable ASEAN to fully function as a rules-based organisation; and
- 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.

**A.1.2. Implement ASEAN agreements signed/ratified**

- i. Ensure the early ratification of ASEAN agreements signed; and
- ii. Ensure the effective implementation of those agreements already ratified by ASEAN Member States.

**A.1.3. Uphold the principles of international law governing the peaceful conduct of relations**

- i. Respect the United Nations (UN) Charter and international law governing the peaceful relations among states.

**A.1.4. Respect the principles of independence, sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity, non-interference, and national identity**

- i. Abstain from participation in any policy or activity, including the use of its territory, pursued by any ASEAN Member State or non-ASEAN State or any non-State actor, which threatens the sovereignty, territorial integrity or political and economic stability of ASEAN Member States;
- ii. Promote consultations and strengthen cooperation in addressing threats and challenges that may affect the security and territorial integrity of ASEAN Member States;
- iii. Disseminate information on the ASEAN Charter, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) and other key ASEAN instruments to the general public as well as endeavour to include such knowledge in school curricula; and
- iv. Organise national/regional activities to promote awareness and understanding of the principles and norms in key ASEAN instruments, including the ASEAN Charter and the TAC.

**A.1.5. Promote awareness of our people-oriented, people-centred community**

- i. Encourage the ASEAN Secretariat and the ASEAN Foundation in coordination with relevant ASEAN Bodies to promote awareness and understanding of ASEAN, which will include:
  - a. Encourage the holding of events such as academic conferences, workshops and seminars; and
  - b. Release periodic publications on ASEAN for dissemination to the public;
- ii. Promote, in coordination with relevant ASEAN Bodies, the inclusion of ASEAN studies in the curricula of educational institutions of ASEAN Member States;
- iii. Promote better understanding of ASEAN among the general public of Dialogue Partners and other external parties through relevant ASEAN Centres and ASEAN Committees in Third Countries and International Organisations (ACTCs);
- iv. Implement effectively the ASEAN Lane at international airports in ASEAN Member States;
- v. Explore an ASEAN business travel card to facilitate the movement of business people among ASEAN Member States;
- vi. Consider Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)/guidelines on consular assistance by ASEAN Missions in Third Countries to nationals of ASEAN Member States where they have no representation; and
- vii. Continue to explore the feasibility of an ASEAN common visa for non-ASEAN nationals.

**A.1.6. Promote understanding and appreciation of the political and legal systems, culture and history of ASEAN Member States**

- i. Promote the inclusion of the study of political and legal systems, culture and history of ASEAN Member States in school curricula to enhance understanding of and respect for the common identity and diversity of ASEAN;
- ii. Develop a pool of experts to promote understanding, knowledge and appreciation of diversity of ASEAN Member States, including through the ASEAN University Network (AUN) and ASEAN Studies Centres; and

- iii. Encourage the exchange of students at high school and university levels to increase their knowledge of ASEAN Member States and ASEAN cooperation.

**A.1.7. Strengthen respect for and recognition of the purposes and principles of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia**

- i. Conduct activities to promote the adherence to the underlying principles of the TAC among High Contracting Parties.

**A.2. Strengthen democracy, good governance, the rule of law, promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as combat corruption**

**A.2.1. Promote principles of democracy**

- i. Convene seminars, training programmes and other capacity building activities for government officials, think-tanks, youth as well as civil society organisations (CSOs), in collaboration with external parties to share experiences on democracy and principles of democracy;
- ii. Share ASEAN experiences in promoting democracy and democratic institutions, including through the Bali Democracy Forum; and
- iii. Compile best practices on voluntary electoral observations and share such information among ASEAN Member States.

**A.2.2. Instil the culture of good governance and mainstream the principles thereof into the policies and practices of the ASEAN Community**

- i. Promote dialogue and partnership among governments and relevant stakeholders to foster and enable new ideas, concepts and methods with a view to enhance transparency, accountability, participatory and effective governance;
- ii. Encourage the inclusion of the culture of good governance in educational curricula;
- iii. Ensure the full and effective implementation of agreed areas of cooperation to enhance good governance within the ASEAN Community, including to improve professional skills of public entities on good governance;

- iv. Encourage the exchange and promotion of best practices on good governance and public service delivery, including through the use of e-government and relevant social media among the civil services of ASEAN Member States;
- v. Support the ASEAN Foundation to strengthen its collaboration with the private sector and other relevant stakeholders to instil corporate social responsibility; and
- vi. Promote the sharing of experiences and best practices through workshops and seminars on leadership concepts and principles of good governance, aimed at setting baselines, benchmarks and norms.

**A.2.3. Instil the culture of integrity and anti-corruption and mainstream the principles thereof into the policies and practices of the ASEAN Community**

- i. Fully implement the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Cooperation for Preventing and Combating Corruption signed on 15 December 2004;
- ii. Promote ASEAN cooperation to prevent and combat corruption, among others, by utilising the Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters 2004 (MLAT);
- iii. Promote ASEAN cooperation in implementing the United Nations Convention against Corruption;
- iv. Strengthen the implementation of domestic laws and regulations against corruption and of anti-corruption practices in both the public and private sectors within ASEAN, including through capacity building programmes;
- v. Intensify cooperation, in the framework of applicable national and international laws to combat corruption, in the area of asset recovery and in denying safe havens to those found guilty of corruption;
- vi. Encourage the strengthening of the South East Asia Parties Against Corruption network to enhance regional cooperation on anti-corruption and at the national level through relevant bodies or agencies;
- vii. Promote the sharing of experiences, best practices and exchange of views on ethics, values and the culture of integrity to strengthen anti-corruption activities, including through the ASEAN Integrity Dialogue; and

- viii. Enhance and encourage cooperation among financial intelligence/authorised units of ASEAN Member States in the areas of collection, analysis and dissemination of information regarding potential money laundering.

**A.2.4. Establish programmes for mutual support and assistance among ASEAN Member States in the development of strategies for strengthening the rule of law, judicial systems and legal infrastructure**

- 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;
- ii. Continue the work of existing Working Groups (WGs) of ALAWMM and ASLOM to strengthen legal infrastructure in ASEAN, including the ASLOM WG on Examining Modalities for Harmonisation of Trade Laws of ASEAN Member States and the ASLOM WG on Judicial Assistance in Civil and Commercial Matters;
- iii. Support activities and programmes to strengthen networking and cooperation among the judiciaries in ASEAN Member States;
- iv. Enhance access to legal assistance in ASEAN Member States to promote social justice through more public education and outreach activities;
- v. Undertake comparative studies for lawmakers on the promulgation of laws and regulations;
- vi. Promote the development of university curricula on legal systems of individual ASEAN Member States and legal instruments pertaining to the ASEAN Community; and
- vii. Enhance cooperation between ALAWMM and ALA and other Track II organisations through seminars, workshops and research on international law, including ASEAN agreements.

**A.2.5. Promote and protect human rights, fundamental freedoms and social justice to ensure our peoples live with dignity, in peace, harmony and prosperity**

- i. Encourage ASEAN Member States to strengthen domestic legislation and institutions, promote human rights education and hold consultations with relevant stakeholders;

- ii. Encourage ASEAN Member States to ratify or to accede to core international human rights instruments and ensure their effective implementation;
- iii. Encourage ASEAN Member States to enhance engagement with the UN and relevant human rights mechanisms to which ASEAN Member States are parties, including on the Universal Periodic Review and relevant Treaty Bodies as well as share experiences and best practices;
- iv. Support the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) in the discharge of its mandate, in accordance with its Terms of Reference (TOR);
- v. Enhance exchange of information on efforts to advance human rights and fundamental freedoms among ASEAN Member States in accordance with the ASEAN Charter, ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (AHRD) and Phnom Penh Statement on the Adoption of the AHRD as well as international human rights declarations and instruments to which ASEAN Member States are parties;
- vi. Strengthen the implementation of the AHRD and the Phnom Penh Statement on the Adoption of the AHRD, including dissemination of information and promotion of public awareness on this Declaration;
- vii. Promote the mainstreaming of human rights across all three Pillars of the ASEAN Community, through consultation among relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies;
- viii. Encourage interaction and consultation, where appropriate, among AICHR, relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and other stakeholders, including CSOs concerned with the promotion and protection of human rights;
- ix. Continue the work of AICHR in conducting collaborative research on thematic human rights issues in accordance with its TOR;
- x. Continue the work of AICHR in obtaining information from ASEAN Member States on the promotion and protection of human rights;
- xi. Enhance public awareness of human rights, among the peoples of ASEAN, including publication of periodic updates



of AICHR activities and public information activities by relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies;

- xii. Consider, as appropriate, the review of the TOR of AICHR as provided for in the TOR, consistent with the purposes and principles of the ASEAN Charter, with a view to further enhancing the promotion and protection of human rights within ASEAN;
- xiii. Strengthen interaction between the network of existing human rights mechanisms as well as other CSOs, with relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies;
- xiv. Encourage coordination and consultation among relevant ASEAN Organs and Bodies with a view to enhancing the implementation of the AHRD, the Ha Noi Declaration on the Enhancement of Welfare and Development of ASEAN Women and Children as well as the Bali Declaration on the Enhancement of the Role and Participation of Persons with Disabilities in the ASEAN Community, while maintaining their respective reporting lines; and
- xv. Cooperate closely with the relevant Sectoral Bodies, while maintaining the respective reporting lines, to expedite the work of the ASEAN Committee on the Implementation of the Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers in developing an instrument to ensure the rights of migrant workers are well protected within the region, in accordance with the laws, regulations and policies of respective ASEAN Member States.

**A.2.6. Increase the engagement and participation of entities associated with ASEAN and relevant stakeholders in moving forward the ASEAN Political-Security Community**

- i. Intensify engagement with ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly in promoting a rules-based ASEAN Community, including the implementation of ASEAN declarations and agreements at the national level, to facilitate regional integration;
- ii. Promote further interaction between ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and relevant entities associated with ASEAN, such as the ASEAN Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN-ISIS) Network and the ASEAN Supreme Audit Institutions;

- iii. Promote research and scholarly publications by ASEAN think-tanks and academic institutions on regional and international developments; and
- iv. Promote outreach and joint activities between relevant ASEAN Bodies and ASEAN stakeholders, including youth and CSOs, at the national and regional levels.

**A.3. Embed the culture of peace, including the values of tolerance and moderation as a force for harmony, peace and stability in our region and beyond**

**A.3.1. Promote the culture of peace, inter alia, respect for diversity, promotion of tolerance and understanding of faith, religion and culture**

- i. Encourage the active participation of relevant representatives to inter-faith dialogues within and among ASEAN Member States to instil the values of tolerance and moderation at the grassroots level;
- ii. Intensify the involvement of all members of the community, including youth, in activities relevant to the promotion of the culture of peace and moderation, through the conduct of workshops and seminars and other activities pursuant to the Langkawi Declaration on the Global Movement of Moderates; and
- iii. Promote greater interaction between ASEAN initiatives on moderation and tolerance, and on-going regional and global initiatives such as the Inter-faith Dialogue and Dialogue among Civilisations, in order to develop synergies and build partnerships.

**A.3.2. Promote tolerance and moderation to bridge differences, defuse tensions, resolve disputes and counter violent extremism in all its forms and manifestations**

- i. Promote education as an effective means of instilling respect for life and the values of tolerance and moderation, non-violence and mutual understanding to prevent the spread of violent extremism and addressing its root causes;
- ii. Encourage dialogue and exchanges, organise outreach programmes and cross-cultural dialogue to amplify voices of moderation;

- iii. Encourage the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR) and the ASEAN Foundation to conduct seminars, workshops and training programmes in collaboration with the Global Movement of Moderates (GMM) and the UN in promoting the voices of moderation;
- iv. Carry out technical cooperation with the UN and relevant regional organisations, where feasible, to exchange expertise and experiences in promoting tolerance and moderation;
- v. Undertake studies to promote gender mainstreaming in peacebuilding, peace process and conflict resolution;
- vi. Provide the space, support and mechanisms to cultivate emerging leadership from various stakeholders, including women and youth, to help enhance ASEAN innovativeness and vitality to effectively meet global challenges, including the rise of violent extremism; and
- vii. Share best practices and successful case studies on engagement and integration policies between the ASEAN Foundation, the AIPR and the GMM, on the one side, and Dialogue Partners and other external parties, including relevant regional and international organisations, on the other.

## **B. PEACEFUL, SECURE AND STABLE REGION**

- 8. In building a peaceful, secure and stable region, ASEAN adopts a comprehensive approach to security which enhances our capacity to deal with existing and emerging challenges, resolves differences and disputes by peaceful means, ensures that our region remains free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction as well as enhances maritime security and cooperation.
- 9. The key elements of the peaceful, secure and stable region are:

### **B.1. Strengthen ASEAN ability to deal with existing and emerging challenges**

#### **B.1.1. Strengthen mechanisms under the ASEAN Political-Security Community**

- i. Enhance the role of the Chair of ASEAN, as stipulated in the ASEAN Charter, to ensure more effective and timely ASEAN responses to specific challenges;

- ii. Enhance the role of the APSC Council and its Chair through giving greater focus to substantive and strategic issues and to deal effectively with cross-sectoral and cross-pillar issues under its purview;
- iii. Enhance the role of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting (AMM) and its Chair in addressing existing and emerging challenges, particularly those arising from the rapidly evolving geopolitical landscape, and strengthening ASEAN centrality;
- iv. Enhance the role of the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) and its Chair in promoting defence and security dialogue as well as practical cooperation to enhance regional peace, security and stability;
- v. Enhance the role of the ALAWMM and its Chair in strengthening law and legal cooperation within ASEAN and the provision of mutual legal and judicial assistance between ASEAN Member States in support of the ASEAN Community;
- vi. Enhance the role of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crimes (AMMTC) and its Chair to address existing and emerging transnational crimes, in cooperation and coordination with other relevant ASEAN Bodies;
- vii. Enhance the role of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters (AMMD) and its Chair in providing strategic guidance in realising a Drug-Free ASEAN and strengthening cooperation in cross-cutting issues related to drug matters;
- viii. Enhance the role of the Chair of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in enhancing dialogue and cooperation on political-security issues through the promotion of confidence-building measures, preventive diplomacy activities as well as conflict resolution initiatives;
- ix. Enhance the role of the Secretary-General of ASEAN in carrying out the duties and responsibilities in accordance with the provisions of the ASEAN Charter and as mandated by ASEAN Member States, including assisting the ASEAN Chair in carrying out specific work related to external relations and emergency humanitarian situations; and
- x. Enhance the role of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR) in supporting the work of the ASEAN Coordinating Council (ACC), APSC Council

and Sectoral Ministerial Bodies and to facilitate ASEAN cooperation with external parties.

**B.1.2. Strengthen the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting to engage in strategic dialogue on defence and security issues as well as practical cooperation, while enhancing ASEAN centrality in the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting-Plus process**

- i. Enhance strategic dialogue within the ADMM in order to promote closer cooperation in addressing common defence and security issues;
- ii. Implement the Work Programme of ADMM on practical cooperation relating to defence and security issues of common concern;
- iii. Promote the exchange of observers, including other forms of participation, of ADMM-Plus countries in ADMM-Plus military and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) exercises on a flexible, non-binding and voluntary basis;
- iv. Ensure the implementation of the Direct Communications Link among all ADMM countries for secure and effective communication, and promote its establishment to the ADMM-Plus countries;
- v. Promote, inter alia, enhanced cooperation and coordination in the field of military medicine, including through an ASEAN Centre of Military Medicine;
- vi. Implement the work of ADMM-Plus, including the ADMM-Plus Experts WG Work Plans, namely, in the areas of HADR, peacekeeping operations, maritime security, military medicine, counter-terrorism and humanitarian mine action while ensuring ASEAN centrality in the process; and
- vii. Conduct regular review of existing initiatives to align priorities of ADMM and ADMM-Plus cooperation with emerging regional and international issues of common concern.

**B.1.3. Strengthen the ASEAN Regional Forum process in support of the ASEAN Community**

- i. Enhance the ARF as an action-oriented mechanism that develops concrete and effective responses to the common challenges confronting the Asia-Pacific region;

- ii. Encourage the role of the ARF Chair as a conduit for information sharing and coordination among ARF Participants in between the annual meetings of the ARF;
- iii. Enhance the role of the Secretary-General of ASEAN in the ARF, including further strengthening the ARF unit in the ASEAN Secretariat;
- iv. Implement the decision of the ARF Ministers to move the ARF towards the stage of preventive diplomacy while continuing to strengthen confidence-building measures;
- v. Develop concrete and mutually beneficial cooperation programmes, as appropriate, between ARF and relevant regional and international organisations, including those of the UN system;
- vi. Recognise the ARF Experts and Eminent Persons' contribution to the work of the ARF and utilise their recommendations, where appropriate, to strengthen the ARF;
- vii. Expand the capacity of the ARF Heads of Defence Universities, Colleges and Institutions Meeting to promote defence and military cooperation, including exchanging best practices; and
- viii. Review the ARF mechanisms and processes to strengthen the effectiveness and coordination of the ARF, including taking into account the work of other relevant mechanisms.

**B.1.4. Strengthen the East Asia Summit process in support of the ASEAN Community**

- i. Continue to ensure that the East Asia Summit (EAS) remains a Leaders-led, outward-looking and strategic forum to promote peace and stability in the region;
- ii. Ensure the effective implementation of activities and projects under the EAS cooperation framework in all priority areas;
- iii. Enhance the capability of the ASEAN Secretariat to coordinate and follow up on EAS cooperation, including strengthening the division handling EAS affairs; and
- iv. Encourage further coordination among the EAS Heads of Mission in Jakarta to strengthen EAS cooperation and facilitate effective follow-up of EAS Meetings.

**B.1.5. Strengthen the ASEAN Plus Three cooperation framework in support of the ASEAN Community**

- i. Strengthen the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) process and cooperation as a main vehicle in realising the long-term goal of an East Asia community with ASEAN as the driving force in the evolving regional architecture;
- ii. Ensure the timely and effective implementation of activities and measures under the APT Work Plans; and
- iii. Implement relevant recommendations of the East Asian Vision Group (EAVG) II to enhance APT cooperation.

**B.2. Respond to urgent issues or crisis situations affecting ASEAN in an effective and timely manner**

- i. Support the Chair of ASEAN in ensuring 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;
- ii. Convene special meetings at the Leaders, Ministers, Senior Officials or CPR levels, including through video conferencing in the event of crisis situations affecting ASEAN;
- iii. Activate the ASEAN Troika to address urgent situations affecting regional peace and stability in a timely manner;
- iv. Explore ways and means or applicable mechanisms which could be activated immediately to address urgent situations affecting ASEAN as well as regional peace and stability; and
- v. Build on existing mechanisms to enhance early warning capability to prevent occurrence or escalation of conflicts.

**B.3. Enhance ASEAN capacity to address non-traditional security issues effectively and in a timely manner**

**B.3.1. Strengthen cooperation in addressing and combating transnational crimes**

- i. Work towards elevating the MLAT 2004 to an ASEAN treaty;
- ii. Consider accession of third countries to the MLAT 2004;

- iii. Implement effectively the Work Programme of the ASEAN Plan of Action to Combat Transnational Crimes covering terrorism, illicit drug trafficking, trafficking in persons, arms smuggling, sea piracy, money laundering, international economic crimes and cybercrimes;
- iv. Enhance cooperation and coordination among ASEAN Sectoral Bodies in dealing with transnational crimes, including through information exchange, experience sharing, joint training and other relevant activities;
- v. Enhance cooperation in addressing other emerging transnational crimes, including illicit trafficking of wildlife and timber as well as people smuggling, in accordance with relevant international conventions;
- vi. Enhance public and media awareness campaigns against transnational crimes;
- vii. Strengthen cooperation and collaboration with all relevant stakeholders including the private sector, media and civil society in combating transnational crimes;
- viii. Strengthen the capacity of the criminal justice system including judges, prosecutors and law enforcement officials on combating transnational crimes within ASEAN and with relevant regional and international organisations;
- ix. Enhance law enforcement agencies cooperation, including through information and intelligence sharing, mutual assistance, coordinated patrols and the return of the proceeds of crime;
- x. Increase information exchange on transnational crimes through the existing database;
- xi. Strengthen mutual cooperation in combating and suppressing transnational crimes, particularly document frauds/forgery and the monitoring of financial actions suspected of supporting these crimes and terrorism actions; and
- xii. Continue the work of ALAWMM to enhance cooperation on the issue of extradition.



**B.3.2. Continue to enhance cooperation against terrorism**

- i. Implement effectively the ASEAN Convention on Counter-Terrorism and the ASEAN Comprehensive Plan of Action on Counter-Terrorism;
- ii. Endeavour to ratify/accede to the relevant international instruments on counter-terrorism;
- iii. Strengthen cooperation to enhance moderation agenda and deradicalisation initiatives to negate and defuse radicalisation, self-radicalisation and extremism in ASEAN, including through exchange of experiences and best practices on deradicalisation, rehabilitation and re-education to prevent and suppress terrorist acts;
- iv. Enhance cooperation within and between the regions to support initiatives aimed at addressing and combating the root causes of terrorism and conditions conducive to terrorism, violent extremism and radicalism;
- v. Strengthen cooperation within and between the regions to prevent and suppress the flow of foreign terrorist fighters;
- vi. Enhance cooperation and collaboration among Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation, International Law Enforcement Academy, and Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism and other relevant centres in ASEAN and other regions, to continuously develop new strategies, techniques and tactics to counter terrorism;
- vii. Continue to develop the capacity of financial intelligence/ authorised units and other relevant agencies involved in anti-money laundering/counter-terrorism financing efforts, to better detect, analyse and investigate the laundering of proceeds of crime, in accordance with the Financial Action Task Force's Recommendations;
- viii. Continue to share experiences and expertise in implementing and enforcing counter-terrorism laws, including through international workshops and seminars;
- ix. Enhance linkages between counter-terrorism units and lead counter-terrorism responders as well as improve awareness and understanding of counter-terrorism response architecture in each ASEAN Member State;

- x. Encourage cooperation and coordination on counter-terrorism issues involving law enforcement, military and non-military government agencies;
- xi. Strengthen cooperation with Dialogue Partners and relevant international organisations, including UN agencies, on counter-terrorism through various initiatives and projects; and
- xii. Intensify information sharing on terrorist and transnational crime organisations, including operational methods, movements, terrorism financing and other relevant illicit activities such as smuggling and misuse of weapons and explosives, as well as Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE) materials.

### **B.3.3. Pursue our aspiration of a Drug-Free ASEAN**

- i. Strengthen the role of the AMMD in coordinating a coherent, comprehensive and effective ASEAN strategy in realising the aspiration of a Drug-Free ASEAN;
- ii. Continue to work towards a Drug-Free ASEAN which signifies ASEAN resilience and commitment to protect the people and communities from illicit drugs;
- iii. Strengthen measures to suppress production, trafficking and abuse of illicit drugs as well as the control of import and export of precursor chemicals;
- iv. Develop holistic, integrated and balanced strategies, addressing both supply and demand reduction, to achieve a balance between treatment and rehabilitation approaches as well as the law enforcement approach in combating drug crimes;
- v. Develop evidence-based best practices and standards on policy formulation and interventions on drug prevention and control and other related measures;
- vi. Share best practices and promote education and advocacy programmes targeting all sectors of society, particularly youth;
- vii. Enhance the scientific laboratory capacity of ASEAN Member States in precursor identification and drugs signature analysis for drug enforcement operations and intelligence;

- viii. Promote the role of the ASEAN Narcotics Cooperation Centre in enhancing networking and sharing of information and intelligence among drug law enforcement agencies of ASEAN Member States;
- ix. Strengthen the capacity of the criminal justice system including judges, prosecutors and law enforcement officials on drug control;
- x. Develop ASEAN Senior Officials on Drug Matters work plans towards achieving the regional aspiration of a Drug-Free ASEAN;
- xi. Enhance cooperation with external parties, including Dialogue Partners and international organisations, on combating drug trafficking and drug-related crimes;
- xii. Develop multilateral or bilateral legal arrangements to combat drug and precursor chemical trafficking;
- xiii. Promote exchange of information concerning the profile of drug crime syndicates as well as watch-list of their drug activities; and
- xiv. Provide transfer of knowledge on best practices on the control and the disposal of precursor chemicals and essential chemicals.

#### **B.3.4. Enhance cooperation against trafficking in persons and people smuggling**

- i. Ensure the early ratification of the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children and its effective implementation, as well as carry out the ASEAN Plan of Action Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children;
- ii. Encourage the ratification and implementation of the UN Convention Against Transnational Organised Crimes, as well as the Protocol Against Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air and Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children;
- iii. Strengthen criminal justice responses as well as preventive measures to trafficking in persons, bearing in mind the need to protect victims of trafficking in accordance with relevant ASEAN instruments and where applicable, other relevant international conventions and protocols on trafficking in persons; and

- iv. Enhance cooperation to combat trafficking in persons and people smuggling with Dialogue Partners and other external parties.

**B.3.5. Work towards the elimination of the smuggling of small arms and light weapons**

- i. Promote the full implementation of measures by relevant Sectoral Bodies, to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects, in accordance with the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects as well as the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons; and
- ii. Endeavour to suppress arms smuggling through regional initiatives.

**B.3.6. Strengthen cooperation in combating cybercrimes**

- i. Strengthen cooperation in combating cybercrimes, including timely sharing of relevant information and best practices among law enforcement agencies, taking into account the need to develop or improve appropriate laws and capabilities to address cybercrimes;
- ii. Strengthen the capacity of criminal justice authorities to apply the laws and legislation on cybercrimes and electronic evidence;
- iii. Promote law enforcement training on cyber security and cybercrimes;
- iv. Strengthen public-private partnership to enhance information sharing between the private sector and law enforcement agencies to identify and mitigate cybercrime threats; and
- v. Raise awareness and understanding of ASEAN Member States on cybercrimes and cyber-terrorism.

**B.3.7. Strengthen cooperation on border management**

- i. Strengthen cooperation on border management, in accordance with respective domestic laws and policies, to jointly address matters of common concern including forgeries of identification and travel documents, as well as

explore the use of relevant technologies to manage borders more effectively to stem the flow of terrorists and criminals; and

- ii. Explore, where appropriate, coordinated border patrols and coordinated inspections between ASEAN Member States to combat transnational crimes, particularly drug trafficking, trafficking in persons, and smuggling of goods, people and weapons, in accordance with respective domestic laws, rules, regulations and policies.

**B.3.8. Strengthen ASEAN cooperation on disaster management and emergency response**

- i. Enhance joint effective and early response at the political and operational levels in activating the ASEAN disaster management arrangements to assist affected countries in the event of major disasters;
- ii. Implement the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) as the main common platform for disaster management in the region;
- iii. Enhance the key role of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance as the ASEAN coordinating body for disaster management in the region and where appropriate, work in partnership with relevant national, regional and international agencies and centres such as the United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot, the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre, Regional HADR Coordination Centre and United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs;
- iv. Operationalise fully the SOP for Regional Standby Arrangements and Coordination of Joint Disaster Relief and Emergency Response Operations for establishing joint operations in providing relief aid to disaster affected areas of ASEAN Member States, in line with the AADMER;
- v. Enhance civilian-military coordination in providing effective and timely response to major natural disasters and emergencies;
- vi. Promote synergy on disaster management between ASEAN and other ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the ARF, APT, EAS and ADMM-Plus with the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management as the driver in the process; and

- vii. Ensure that disaster risk reduction is integrated into ASEAN strategies on disaster management and emergency response.

**B.3.9. Enhance ASEAN capacity to address transnational crimes and transboundary challenges**

- i. Strengthen existing ASEAN mechanisms to consider preventive management to effectively address these new challenges, including working with Dialogue Partners, UN and other relevant bodies with the consent of countries concerned;
- ii. Convene special meetings, as and when necessary, at Senior Officials' level to address challenges of transboundary or transnational nature such as haze pollution, pandemics, transnational organised crimes, irregular movement of persons, hazardous waste, oil spill incidents, trafficking in wildlife and timber; and
- iii. Promote studies by think-tanks, universities and other relevant academic institutions to identify new and transboundary challenges arising from non-traditional security issues.

**B.4. Resolve differences and disputes by peaceful means, in accordance with the ASEAN Charter and principles of international law, including refraining from the threat or use of force as well as adopting peaceful dispute settlement mechanisms while strengthening confidence-building measures, promoting preventive diplomacy activities and conflict resolution initiatives**

**B.4.1. Promote confidence-building measures and preventive diplomacy activities**

- i. Promote exchanges and cooperation between defence officials and exchange visits between military training institutions to promote trust and mutual understanding;
- ii. Advance the ARF process towards preventive diplomacy, through the effective implementation of the ARF Preventive Diplomacy Work Plan 2011 while continuing with confidence-building measures;
- iii. Compile best practices on confidence-building measures, preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution for further development by the ARF;

- iv. Explore and consider the potential for mediation/facilitated dialogue and conciliation under the ARF process, with the consent of all directly involved parties; and
- v. Identify and partner with mutually agreeable organisations, such as the UN, on preventive diplomacy capacity building programmes, experience sharing and training under the ARF framework.

**B.4.2. Promote greater transparency and understanding of defence policies and security perceptions**

- i. Hold voluntary briefings on political and security developments in the region;
- ii. Hold consultations and promote cooperation on regional defence and security matters between ASEAN and Dialogue Partners as well as other external parties, including through the ADMM-Plus;
- iii. Continue to contribute to and publish the annual ASEAN Security Outlook and ARF Security Outlook as well as encourage the publication of white papers on defence by ASEAN Member States and Dialogue Partners with a view to deepening mutual understanding and trust among countries in the region and beyond; and
- iv. Enhance the effective participation of ARF defence officials in ARF activities.

**B.4.3. Build upon existing modes of peaceful settlement of disputes and consider strengthening these with additional mechanisms, as needed**

- i. Enhance the constructive role of ASEAN in, and promote a rules-based approach towards the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the ASEAN Charter, the TAC and other relevant ASEAN instruments as well as principles of international law; and
- ii. Utilise the Protocol to the ASEAN Charter on Dispute Settlement Mechanisms and its relevant Rules (Rules of Good Offices, Rules of Mediation, Rules of Conciliation and Rules of Arbitration).

**B.4.4. Strengthen research activities on peace, conflict management and conflict resolution**

- i. Utilise effectively the AIPR in accordance with its TOR, including undertaking studies to promote gender mainstreaming in peacebuilding, peace process and conflict resolution as well as promoting collaboration and networking between the AIPR and relevant institutes;
- ii. Conduct regional and international seminars and workshops on confidence-building measures, preventive diplomacy, conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict peacebuilding; and
- iii. Strengthen the capacity of and cooperation among research and academic institutes, particularly the ASEAN-ISIS Network and the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific in addressing issues of conflict management and resolution.

**B.4.5. Promote ASEAN Member States active participation in peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding efforts, in accordance with the capacity of respective ASEAN Member States**

- i. Promote the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre to study, document and share best practices to address humanitarian aspects of landmines and explosive remnants of war;
- ii. Encourage further ASEAN Member States to participate in UN peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding efforts outside the region on a flexible, voluntary and non-binding basis;
- iii. Utilise and strengthen the ASEAN Peacekeeping Centres Network to share best practices and enhance capacity building, including highlighting the contributions of ASEAN Member States to the UN;
- iv. Take stock and explore the possibility of establishing a database on peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding capabilities, as appropriate, of participating ASEAN Member States;
- v. Enhance dialogue and cooperation with peacekeeping centres, academic institutions and think-tanks in other regions as well as the UN and other regional and international



organisations on peacekeeping, through information sharing on best practices as well as capacity building in peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding;

- vi. Promote cooperation and coordination among participating ASEAN Member States in UN peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding efforts;
- vii. Encourage contributions of ASEAN Member States to humanitarian assistance in support of UN peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding efforts outside the region;
- viii. Promote human resource development and capacity building programmes in post-conflict peacebuilding efforts:
  - a. Draw up guidelines for training and capacity building needs assessment;
  - b. Identify priority training topics;
  - c. Design training programmes in the identified priority topics and development of training materials;
  - d. Implement annual programmes in each target area;
  - e. Develop cooperation programmes with relevant external parties and financial institutions to promote human resource development and capacity building in post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding; and
  - f. Work towards the development of a systematic training programme for formal and community educators in the field of peace education and reconciliation, which could be conceptualised and implemented.
- ix. Undertake ARF and ADMM-Plus joint training and planning activities, including tabletop and scenario-based planning exercises on peacekeeping operation exercises as and when appropriate with the consent of participants.

#### **B.4.6. Promote and strengthen peace-oriented values**

- i. Continue to undertake studies to increase cooperation in reconciliation and further strengthen peace-oriented values;
- 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; and

- iii. Promote inter-communal understanding through exchange of activities.

**B.5. Preserve Southeast Asia as a region free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, while contributing to global efforts on disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy**

**B.5.1. Ensure the effective implementation of the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone Treaty and its Plan of Action**

- i. Enhance the work of the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) Commission to ensure effective implementation of the SEANWFZ Treaty and its Plan of Action through specific work programmes/projects;
- ii. Intensify the on-going efforts of the State Parties to the SEANWFZ Treaty and the Nuclear Weapon States to resolve all outstanding issues in accordance with the objectives and principles of the SEANWFZ Treaty pertaining to the signing and ratifying of the Protocol to that Treaty at the earliest;
- iii. Continue to submit the biennial SEANWFZ Resolution to the First Committee of the UN General Assembly;
- iv. Promote an enhanced role of the SEANWFZ and its States Parties in relevant multilateral fora and frameworks on disarmament and non-proliferation, including the Review Conferences of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; and
- v. Encourage accession by all ASEAN Member States to relevant instruments such as the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Additional Protocols.

**B.5.2. Develop a coordinated ASEAN approach to improve nuclear safety, in cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency and other relevant partners**

- i. Formalise relations between ASEAN and the IAEA;
- ii. Promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in compliance with the IAEA safety, security and safeguards standards;

- iii. Explore joint research and development projects in civilian nuclear technology, with international organisations, such as the IAEA, through workshops, seminars and exchange of experts;
- iv. Encourage accession to the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency, the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident; and
- v. Strengthen the ASEAN Network of Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy and develop partnerships with nuclear regulatory bodies of other regions and relevant international organisations in order to contribute to nuclear non-proliferation, maintaining international standards of nuclear safety and security, preventing nuclear-related accidents and protecting against nuclear terrorism.

**B.5.3. Support the establishment of regional nuclear weapon-free zones**

- i. Promote awareness of the nuclear weapon-free zones and enhance coordination and cooperation among existing nuclear weapon-free zones and Mongolia, through sharing of experiences and best practices to realise a nuclear weapon-free world; and
- ii. Promote ASEAN participation and constructive role in the Conference of States Parties and Signatories of Treaties that Establish Nuclear Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia.

**B.5.4. Promote disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction while enhancing ASEAN capacity to address deliberate/accidental release of hazardous substances/agents of weapons of mass destruction**

- i. Promote the universalisation of existing international instruments related to the disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), including their means of delivery and related materials and the effective implementation of applicable international instruments while enhancing regional and multilateral cooperation in this area;
- ii. Enhance cooperation in addressing the proliferation of WMD by encouraging the adoption and implementation of effective export control regulations in accordance with relevant international obligations and practice;

- iii. Promote cooperation to maintain Southeast Asia as a region free of all other WMD and CBRNE threats;
- iv. Enhance capacity to address deliberate/accidental release of hazardous substances/agents of WMD, in collaboration with relevant international organisations and external parties; and
- v. Enhance cooperation in addressing the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, with a view to strengthening international standards and norms in support of a nuclear weapon-free world.

**B.6. Enhance maritime security and promote maritime cooperation in ASEAN region and beyond, through the strengthening of ASEAN-led mechanisms and the adoption of internationally accepted maritime conventions and principles**

**B.6.1. Maintain the South China Sea as a sea of peace, prosperity and cooperation**

- i. Continue ASEAN current practice of close consultation among ASEAN Member States on matters pertaining to the South China Sea, including the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) and the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC);
- ii. Intensify dialogue and consultation between ASEAN and China on matters pertaining to the South China Sea;
- iii. Ensure the full and effective implementation of the DOC, including the effective monitoring and assessment of its implementation;
- iv. Intensify negotiation between ASEAN and China for the early adoption of the COC and ensure its full and effective implementation;
- 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);

- vi. Exercise self-restraint by all parties in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes and affect peace and stability including, among others, refraining from action of inhabiting on the presently uninhabited islands, reefs, shoals, cays, and other features;
- vii. Undertake possible joint cooperative activities, measures and projects as provided for in the DOC based on consensus among parties concerned, and which will lead to eventual realisation of the COC;
- viii. Explore or undertake cooperative activities among parties concerned on marine environmental protection;
- ix. Explore or undertake cooperative activities among parties concerned on marine scientific research and other agreed activities;
- 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;
- xi. Promote and enhance trust and confidence between ASEAN and China, including through the effective implementation of the agreed early harvest measures;
- xii. Combat transnational crimes, including but not limited to trafficking in illicit drugs, piracy and armed robbery at sea, and illegal traffic in arms;
- xiii. Pursue further confidence-building and preventive diplomacy measures in the South China Sea, including developing SOP to prevent incidents such as unplanned encounters at sea; and
- xiv. Promote sharing of best practices and lessons learnt regarding maritime dispute settlement and maritime cooperation.

**B.6.2. Promote maritime cooperation to comprehensively address maritime issues**

- i. Enhance coordination among ASEAN mechanisms on maritime cooperation, such as the ASEAN Maritime Forum, to comprehensively address maritime issues;
- ii. Promote dialogue and cooperation on maritime issues in other ASEAN-led mechanisms, such as the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum while ensuring ASEAN centrality;

- iii. Enhance maritime security and safety in the region in order to ensure greater maritime connectivity, anchored on secure and safe sea lines of communication and freedom of navigation;
- iv. Enhance maritime security cooperation, especially maritime law enforcement, including through information sharing, to identify maritime security challenges and their potential impact on regional peace and security;
- v. Promote linkages between national, regional and international mechanisms on maritime cooperation, particularly in combating piracy and armed robbery against ships;
- vi. Promote closer maritime cooperation in the protection and preservation of the marine environment, including the sustainable use of maritime resources and the protection of biodiversity;
- vii. Expand ASEAN maritime cooperation to effectively combat transnational crimes such as maritime terrorism, smuggling of goods, people and weapons, drug trafficking, trafficking in persons, piracy, hijacking, armed robbery against ships, as well as to address transboundary challenges including oil spill incidents and illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, through concrete and practical activities, while maintaining the respective reporting lines;
- viii. Strengthen ASEAN cooperation in enhancing maritime domain awareness and its increased impact on security, safety, economy and environment of the region;
- ix. Enhance cooperation in maritime safety and search and rescue as well as strengthen implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on Cooperation in Search and Rescue of Persons and Vessels in Distress at Sea, through activities such as information sharing, technological cooperation, exchange of visits of authorities concerned, tabletop exercises and field training exercises at sea, as well as collaboration with Dialogue Partners and relevant international maritime organisations;
- x. Strengthen existing maritime cooperation mechanisms, in cooperation with relevant external parties, with a view to augmenting the capacity to combat illegal activities at sea;

- xi. Enhance cooperation with relevant external parties in combating piracy in cases affecting nationals of ASEAN Member States in other regions; and
- xii. Strengthen and expand activities on capacity building of maritime law enforcement agencies in the region, including through engaging external parties, particularly Dialogue Partners.

**B.6.3. Ensure peaceful, safe, free and unimpeded international navigation and overflight, in accordance with relevant international laws**

- i. Support the effective implementation of the relevant international laws and conventions, including the 1982 UNCLOS;
- ii. Promote hotlines of communication among relevant agencies in ASEAN Member States to respond immediately to incidents and emergency situations at sea;
- iii. Enhance cooperation among ASEAN Member States and with relevant external parties in ensuring safety of navigation and overflight in the region, including through workshops and seminars to share experiences and best practices;
- 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; and
- v. Enhance the implementation of the MoU on ASEAN Cooperation Mechanism for Joint Oil Spill Preparedness and Responses as a regional collaborative mechanism to build capacities and capabilities and promote mutual assistance.

**C. ASEAN CENTRALITY IN A DYNAMIC AND OUTWARD-LOOKING REGION**

- 10. In the rapidly changing geopolitical landscape, ASEAN upholds and strengthens ASEAN unity, cohesiveness and ASEAN centrality in the evolving regional architecture that is built upon ASEAN-led mechanisms. As an outward-looking community, ASEAN will continue to deepen cooperation with Dialogue Partners, strengthen engagement with other external parties, reach out to new potential partners for mutually beneficial relations, and play a responsible and constructive role globally based on an ASEAN common platform on international issues.

11. The key elements of ASEAN centrality in a dynamic and outward-looking region are:

**C.1. Strengthen ASEAN unity, cohesiveness and centrality in shaping the evolving regional architecture built upon ASEAN-led mechanisms**

**C.1.1. Strengthen ASEAN centrality in shaping the evolving regional architecture that is open, transparent, inclusive and rules-based**

- i. Conduct more focused deliberations among relevant Senior Officials to discuss and set strategic direction on issues of concern to ASEAN;
- ii. Elaborate a common vision for a regional architecture to strengthen ASEAN centrality in view of the changing strategic and geopolitical landscape;
- iii. Ensure the effective implementation of the Declaration of the East Asia Summit on the Principles for Mutually Beneficial Relations and explore a legally binding instrument building upon the TAC for the wider region; and
- iv. Ensure Sectoral Bodies are well informed of the ASEAN strategic approach and focus of cooperation with external parties.

**C.1.2. Strengthen the effectiveness of ASEAN-led mechanisms, including streamlining their work processes**

- i. Continue initiating, hosting, chairing and/or co-chairing activities and meetings with Dialogue Partners and other external parties within the context of all ASEAN-led mechanisms;
- ii. Enhance information sharing, including institutionalising the practice of cross-briefing and exchange of calendars of activity of relevant meetings of ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and ASEAN-led mechanisms on cross-cutting issues;
- iii. Strengthen and consolidate the EAS process as a Leaders-led forum for strategic dialogue on political, security and economic issues as well as cooperation including establishing appropriate arrangements to facilitate preparation, consistency, continuity and follow-up of issues deliberated upon by the Leaders;



- iv. Strengthen the APT process and mechanisms as a vehicle for community building, economic integration, development cooperation and capacity building, including the implementation of the relevant recommendations in the EAVG II Report and other APT-related initiatives;
- v. Strengthen the ARF as an important forum for identifying and addressing existing and emerging security challenges, through enhanced confidence-building measures and concrete steps towards preventive diplomacy, including through the effective implementation of the Ha Noi Plan of Action to implement the ARF Vision Statement as well as work towards more effective working methods to deliver substantive outcomes at ARF meetings; and
- vi. Strengthen the ADMM and ADMM-Plus processes to help advance the ASEAN vision of the regional architecture, reinforce ASEAN centrality and work towards enhancing the regional capacity and joint capabilities in addressing current and future challenges and opportunities.

**C.2. Deepen cooperation with Dialogue Partners, strengthen engagement with other external parties and reach out to new potential partners for mutually beneficial relations as well as respond collectively and constructively to global developments**

**C.2.1. Strengthen substantial and strategic cooperation with Dialogue Partners**

- i. Adopt a more strategic approach vis-à-vis Dialogue Partners by identifying ASEAN interests and priorities with respective Dialogue Partners;
- ii. Work with Dialogue Partners, through existing mechanisms, to address existing and emerging challenges as well as strengthen development cooperation in ASEAN;
- iii. Work with Dialogue Partners to ensure effective implementation of the respective Plans of Action, including effective utilisation of the existing cooperation funds between ASEAN and Dialogue Partners to enhance cooperation in all areas; and
- iv. Enhance capacity of line agencies of ASEAN Member States on project formulation and appraisal to effectively utilise existing cooperation funds.

**C.2.2. Develop and maintain effective partnerships with external parties to support the ASEAN Community Vision 2025**

- i. Strengthen ASEAN relations with external parties, including the Special Observer and Guests of ASEAN;
- ii. Continue the work of the ASEAN Coordinating Council Working Group in the consideration of all relevant aspects related to Timor-Leste's application as well as its participation in ASEAN activities within the context of its need for capacity building;
- iii. Enhance engagement between the CPR and the ASEAN Secretariat with Ambassadors of non-ASEAN Member States and relevant intergovernmental organisations accredited to ASEAN;
- iv. Develop projects and ensure the effective and efficient utilisation of the cooperation funds and other funds relating to ASEAN cooperation with external parties to support the ASEAN Community;
- v. Utilise more effectively the role of the ACTCs to promote ASEAN and cooperation between ASEAN and the host countries/international organisations;
- vi. Explore cooperation projects with regional organisations such as the Gulf Cooperation Council, Economic Cooperation Organisation, Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and Pacific Alliance as well as other regional and international organisations; and
- vii. Consider requests from external parties for formal partnership with ASEAN in accordance with the Guidelines for ASEAN's External Relations, including on the basis of mutual interest and benefit to support ASEAN community building and taking into account the importance of a holistic perspective based on geostrategic considerations.

**C.2.3. Explore substantial engagement with new potential partners**

- i. Consider new partnerships with interested and potential countries and organisations on the basis of mutual interest and benefit as well as their support to ASEAN community building; and

- ii. Explore other appropriate modalities to engage with new potential partners in mutually beneficial relations.

**C.2.4. Enhance ASEAN capacity to contribute and respond to key international issues of common interest and concern**

- i. Enhance consultations and cooperation on multilateral issues of common interest and concern to project an ASEAN voice and develop common positions, where appropriate, to shape and drive important issues in the global agenda;
- ii. Develop more timely issuance of ASEAN Statements on important international issues of common concern;
- iii. Enhance cooperation between ASEAN and other multilateral organisations and fora on relevant international issues of common interest and concern; and
- iv. Strengthen coordination among ASEAN Member States and where possible, submit ASEAN candidatures to important posts in multilateral fora.

**D. STRENGTHENED ASEAN INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY AND PRESENCE**

12. In order to realise the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, ASEAN institutional capacity and presence shall be strengthened. This will be pursued through streamlining ASEAN work processes, increasing effectiveness, efficiency and coordination in the work of ASEAN Organs and Bodies, strengthening the ASEAN Secretariat, and increasing ASEAN institutional presence at the national, regional and international levels.
13. The key elements of the strengthened ASEAN institutional capacity and presence are:

**D.1. Streamline ASEAN work processes and improve coordination among ASEAN Organs, enhance the conduct of ASEAN external relations and strengthen the ASEAN Secretariat**

**D.1.1. Implement the Report and Recommendations of the High Level Task Force on Strengthening the ASEAN Secretariat and Reviewing the ASEAN Organs as adopted by the ASEAN Leaders at the 25<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in Nay Pyi Taw**

**D.2. Strengthen ASEAN presence and awareness**

**D.2.1. Promote ASEAN institutional presence at the national, regional and international levels**

- i. Encourage the establishment of an ASEAN dedicated unit/division in line Ministries/Agencies in ASEAN Member States;
- ii. Promote the establishment of ASEAN Centres/Institutions in specific areas of cooperation in each ASEAN Member State while taking into account their financial sustainability and the overall effective functioning and efficiency of the ASEAN Secretariat and other Organs; and
- iii. Encourage the establishment of ASEAN Studies Centres and/or ASEAN Studies Programmes in ASEAN Member States and facilitate their networking, as well as strengthen the AUN, to enhance ASEAN awareness and identity at regional and international levels.

#### **D.2.2. Raise the presence and awareness of ASEAN**

- i. Enhance engagement between ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and relevant stakeholders to heighten ASEAN presence and value, and to strengthen coordination among them;
- ii. Implement the ASEAN Communication Master Plan to raise awareness of ASEAN as a Community of Opportunities as tasked by the ASEAN Leaders at the 25<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in Nay Pyi Taw;
- iii. Ensure ASEAN awareness-raising activities and programmes are gender-sensitive and accessible to all segments of society, including persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups; and
- iv. Raise the profile and presence of ASEAN and ASEAN Community in host countries/international organisations.

### **III. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW**

14. ASEAN will ensure the full and effective implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the APSC Blueprint 2025 through relevant mechanisms, efficient mobilisation of resources, effective communication to all stakeholders and regular review and evaluation.

#### **A. Implementation Mechanism**

- i. Align and consolidate the agenda and priorities of relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies under the APSC Pillar with those of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the APSC Blueprint 2025;

- ii. Implement the APSC Blueprint 2025 at the national and ASEAN levels;
- iii. Strengthen coordination on cross-sectoral issues within the APSC and on cross-pillar issues among the three Pillars;
- iv. Strengthen the respective coordinating roles of the ACC, APSC Council, ASEAN Sectoral Ministerial Bodies, Joint Consultative Meeting, Coordinating Conference for the ASEAN Political-Security Community (ASCCO), CPR and ASEAN Secretariat, pursuant to the Report and Recommendations of High Level Task Force on Strengthening the ASEAN Secretariat and Reviewing the ASEAN Organs, to achieve a seamless implementation of the APSC Blueprint 2025; and
- v. Submit an annual assessment on the progress and implementation of the APSC Blueprint 2025 to the ASEAN Summit through the APSC Council.

## **B. Resources**

- i. Mobilise resources from ASEAN Member States and external sources, in terms of, but not limited to, funding, expertise and capacity building support to implement the agreed measures.

## **C. Communication**

- i. Undertake communication activities to facilitate the implementation of the APSC Blueprint 2025 both at national and regional levels, including in line with the ASEAN Communication Master Plan, with the aim of socialising the stakeholders to the initiatives in the APSC Blueprint 2025 and enabling all stakeholders to be involved in and contribute meaningfully to the process.

## **D. Review**

- i. Review and evaluate the APSC Blueprint 2025 to ensure that the activities are responsive to the needs and priorities of ASEAN, taking into account the changing dynamics of the regional and global landscape;
- ii. The review and evaluation shall be conducted in 2017, 2019, 2021 and 2023 by the ASCCO in coordination with the ASEAN Secretariat. The mid-term and end of term reviews will be undertaken in 2020 and 2025, respectively, by the APSC Council, assisted by the ASCCO. In the course of the review and evaluation, ASEAN Member States are given the flexibility to update the APSC Blueprint 2025; and
- iii. The results of the review and evaluation shall be reported by the Secretary-General of ASEAN to the ASEAN Summit through the APSC Council.

## GLOSSARY

<b>AADMER</b>	ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response
<b>ACC</b>	ASEAN Coordinating Council
<b>ACTC</b>	ASEAN Committees in Third Countries and International Organisations
<b>ADMM</b>	ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting
<b>ADMM-Plus</b>	ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus
<b>AHRD</b>	ASEAN Human Rights Declaration
<b>AICHR</b>	ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights
<b>AIPR</b>	ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation
<b>ALA</b>	ASEAN Law Association
<b>ALAWMM</b>	ASEAN Law Ministers Meeting
<b>AMM</b>	ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting
<b>AMMD</b>	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters
<b>AMMTC</b>	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime
<b>ARF</b>	ASEAN Regional Forum
<b>APT</b>	ASEAN Plus Three
<b>ASCCO</b>	Coordinating Conference for the ASEAN Political-Security Community
<b>ASEAN-ISIS</b>	ASEAN Institute of Strategic and International Studies
<b>ASLOM</b>	ASEAN Senior Law Officials Meeting
<b>AUN</b>	ASEAN University Network
<b>CBRNE</b>	Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive
<b>COC</b>	Code of Conduct in the South China Sea
<b>CPR</b>	Committee of Permanent Representative to ASEAN

<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organisation
<b>DOC</b>	Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea
<b>EAS</b>	East Asia Summit
<b>EAVG</b>	East Asian Vision Group
<b>GMM</b>	Global Movement of Moderates
<b>HADR</b>	Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief
<b>IAEA</b>	International Atomic Energy Agency
<b>MLAT</b>	Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNCLOS</b>	UN Convention on the Law of the Sea
<b>SEANWFZ</b>	Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone
<b>EXCOMM</b>	Executive Committee of the Commission for the Treaty on the SEANWFZ Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone
<b>SOP</b>	Standard Operating Procedures
<b>TAC</b>	Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia
<b>TOR</b>	Terms of Reference
<b>WMD</b>	Weapons of Mass Destruction





# ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY BLUEPRINT 2025





## ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY BLUEPRINT 2025

### I. INTRODUCTION

1. The implementation of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprint 2015 has been substantively achieved in, among others, eliminating tariffs and facilitating trade; advancing the services trade liberalisation agenda; liberalising and facilitating investment; streamlining and harmonising capital market regulatory frameworks and platforms; facilitating skilled labour mobility; promoting the development of regional frameworks in competition policy, consumer protection and intellectual property rights; promoting connectivity; narrowing the development gap; and strengthening ASEAN's relationship with its external parties.
2. ASEAN recognises that regional economic integration is a dynamic, ongoing process as economies as well as domestic and external environments are constantly evolving. In this context, ASEAN has initiated two studies for the AEC Blueprint 2025. The AEC Blueprint 2025 has been developed taking into account the recommendations of the two studies, namely, by the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), and the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) and the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS), as well as inputs from other stakeholders. The measures taken have to lead in creating a networked, competitive, innovative, and highly integrated and contestable ASEAN.
3. The overall vision articulated in the AEC Blueprint 2015 remains relevant. The AEC Blueprint 2025 will build on the AEC Blueprint 2015 consisting of five interrelated and mutually reinforcing characteristics, namely: (i) A Highly Integrated and Cohesive Economy; (ii) A Competitive, Innovative, and Dynamic ASEAN; (iii) Enhanced Connectivity and Sectoral Cooperation; (iv) A Resilient, Inclusive, People-Oriented, and People-Centred ASEAN; and (v) A Global ASEAN.
4. The immediate priority is to complete the implementation of measures unfinished under the AEC Blueprint 2015 by end-2016. The continuing commitments of Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Viet Nam (CLMV) under the AEC Blueprint 2015 up to 2018 are also incorporated under the AEC Blueprint 2025.
5. In the next decade, ASEAN will also provide a new emphasis on the development and promotion of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in its economic integration efforts. At the same time, ASEAN will likewise embrace the evolving digital technology as leverage to enhance trade and investments, provide an e-based business platform, promote good governance, and facilitate the use of green technology.

6. The AEC 2025 is envisioned to:
  - i. Create a deeply integrated and highly cohesive ASEAN economy that would support sustained high economic growth and resilience even in the face of global economic shocks and volatilities;
  - ii. Engender a more equitable and inclusive economic growth in ASEAN that narrows the development gap, eliminates if not reduces poverty significantly, sustains high growth rates of per capita income, and maintains a rising middle class;
  - iii. Foster robust productivity growth through innovation, technology and human resource development, and intensified regional research and development that is designed for commercial application to increase ASEAN's competitive edge in moving the region up the global value chains (GVCs) into higher technology and knowledge-intensive manufacturing and services industries;
  - iv. Promote the principles of good governance, transparency, and responsive regulatory regimes through active engagement with the private sector, community-based organisations, and other stakeholders of ASEAN;
  - v. Widen ASEAN people-to-people, institutional, and infrastructure connectivity through ASEAN and sub-regional cooperation projects that facilitate movement of capital as well as skilled labour and talents;
  - vi. Create a more dynamic and resilient ASEAN, capable of responding and adjusting to emerging challenges through robust national and regional mechanisms that address food and energy security issues, natural disasters, economic shocks, and other emerging trade-related issues as well as global mega trends;
  - vii. Incorporate a sustainable growth agenda that promotes a science-based use of, and support for, green technology and energy;
  - viii. Promote the use of the ASEAN Protocol on Enhanced Dispute Settlement Mechanism (EDSM) and develop other approaches to speed up economic dispute resolution;
  - ix. Reinforce ASEAN centrality in the emerging regional economic architecture by maintaining ASEAN's role as the centre and facilitator of economic integration in the East Asian region; and
  - x. Work towards a common position and enhance ASEAN's role and voice in global economic fora.

## II. CHARACTERISTICS AND ELEMENTS OF ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY BLUEPRINT 2025

### A. A Highly Integrated and Cohesive Economy

7. The main objective of this characteristic is to facilitate the seamless movement of goods, services, investment, capital, and skilled labour within ASEAN in order to enhance ASEAN's trade and production networks, as well as to establish a more unified market for its firms and consumers.
8. The key elements of a highly integrated and cohesive ASEAN economy include:

#### A.1. Trade in Goods

9. The implementation of AEC Blueprint 2015 measures relating to tariff elimination in accordance with the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA) and trade facilitation have contributed to greater free flow of goods. In AEC 2025, ASEAN will continue to reduce or eliminate border and behind-the-border regulatory barriers that impede trade, so as to achieve competitive, efficient, and seamless movement of goods within the region.
10. Strategic measures include the following:
  - i. Strengthen ATIGA further. In view of the ongoing review of the ASEAN+1 free trade agreements (FTAs) and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) negotiations, commitments in the ATIGA will be reviewed and refined to, among others, enhance provisions to entrench ASEAN centrality, strengthen the ATIGA's notification process, and bring down further the remaining tariff barriers in ASEAN towards the free flow of goods in the region.
  - ii. Simplify and Strengthen the Implementation of the Rules of Origin (ROO). ROO implemented by ASEAN Member States should be simplified, business-friendly and trade-facilitative, to benefit the region's trade, in particular the participation of MSMEs to encourage them to expand, upgrade, and deepen their linkages within the region. Towards this end, priority sectors for Product Specific Rules (PSRs) can be negotiated, and processes for the determination of origin criteria streamlined.
  - iii. Accelerate and Deepen the Implementation of Trade Facilitation Measures. ASEAN played a leading role in the conclusion of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Trade Facilitation (ATF) in 2013. Beyond ensuring the smooth implementation of the ATF in ASEAN Member States, ASEAN aims towards convergence

in trade facilitation regimes among ASEAN Member States and to move closer to the global best practice. The ASEAN Trade Facilitation-Joint Consultative Committee (ATF-JCC) comprising representatives from the public and private sectors has been established to accelerate work on trade facilitation and ensure expeditious movement of goods within the region.

Among the key measures are the following:

- a. Complete measures initiated under the AEC Blueprint 2015;
- b. Fully roll-out the National Single Windows in all ASEAN Member States, and widen the scope of the ASEAN Single Window project to include more documents and stakeholders in all ASEAN Member States;
- c. Cooperate on the effective operationalisation of the National and ASEAN Trade Repositories for enhanced regulatory transparency and certainty for the private sector in the region;
- d. Streamline and simplify administrative regulatory regimes, documentary requirements, as well as import and export procedures, including customs procedures;
- e. Deepen regional implementation of trade-facilitative ASEAN initiatives such as Authorised Economic Operators (AEO) programme and Self-Certification programme;
- f. Strengthen public-private sector cooperation, collaboration, and partnership in improving the process, institutional and infrastructural foundations of efficient and effective trade facilitation within the region;
- g. Minimise trade protection and compliance costs in dealing with Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs). Most NTMs address regulatory objectives such as environmental, health and safety, security or cultural considerations, but they can also significantly impede trade inadvertently or by design. Addressing NTMs involves the following: (i) accelerating work towards full elimination of non-tariff barriers; (ii) standards and conformance measures, e.g. equivalence in technical regulations, standards harmonisation, alignment with international standards and mutual recognition arrangements (MRAs); and (iii) streamlining procedures and reducing requirements for certificates, permits and licenses to import or export.

Measures that give rise to a trade facilitative regime in ASEAN include the following:

1. Explore imposing stringent criteria and sunset clause on trade-protective NTMs such as quotas and other quantity restrictions in imports and exports;
  2. Embed good regulatory practice (GRP) in implementing domestic regulations and practices and thereby minimise compliance cost of meeting NTM requirements;
  3. Strengthen coordination with private sector in determining, prioritising and minimising the unnecessary regulatory burden of NTMs on the private sector; and
  4. Explore alternative ways to addressing NTMs such as sectoral or value chain approaches to deal with NTMs.
- h. Work towards facilitative standards and conformance. This involves accelerated implementation of harmonisation of standards and technical regulations, improvement of quality and capability of conformity assessment, enhanced information exchange on laws, rules, and regulatory regimes on standards and conformity assessment procedures. This also involves regional cooperation and agreement on measures to facilitate MSME upgrading towards regionally and/or internationally agreed standards to facilitate exports. Relevant measures include the following:
1. Complete and deepen initiatives begun under the AEC Blueprint 2015;
  2. Undertake concerted regional and national programmes to upgrade the technical capacity and physical infrastructure for effective and efficient conformity assessment regime in the region;
  3. Establish effective measures for transparency and communication on country-specific requirements;
  4. Expand coverage of sectors under standards and conformance beyond the priority integration sectors;
  5. Embed GRP in the preparation, adoption, and implementation of standards and conformance rules, regulations, and procedures;
  6. Strengthen public-private partnership and enhance contribution of the private sector in designing, monitoring, reviewing, and updating of standards and conformance regime in the region; and

7. Strengthen cooperation with Dialogue Partners in the implementation of technical barriers to trade (TBT) Chapters of ASEAN+1 FTAs, and future economic partnership and free trade agreements.

## **A.2. Trade in Services**

11. The objective is to further broaden and deepen services integration within ASEAN, ASEAN's integration into the global supply chains in both goods and services, and enhance ASEAN Member States' competitiveness in services. A strong services sector facilitates industrial development, innovation, and efficiency. The end result is the maximisation of potential contribution of the services sector to economic development and growth.
12. Through the subsequent rounds of negotiations under the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Services (AFAS), ASEAN has continued to broaden the coverage and reduce the limitations on market access and national treatment across services sectors, which go beyond similar efforts at the WTO. The next agenda is to facilitate the negotiations and implementation of the ASEAN Trade in Services Agreement (ATISA) as the legal instrument for further integration of services sectors in the region.
13. The services sector will be further integrated through the implementation of the ATISA and continuing efforts to:
  - i. Review existing flexibilities, limitations, thresholds and carve-outs, as appropriate;
  - ii. Enhance mechanisms to attract foreign direct investment (FDI) in the services sectors, including but not limited to foreign equity participation to support GVC activities;
  - iii. Explore alternative approaches for further liberalisation of services;
  - iv. Establish possible disciplines on domestic regulations to ensure competitiveness of the services sector, taking into consideration other non-economic or development or regulatory objectives;
  - v. Consider the development of sectoral annexes; and
  - vi. Enhance technical cooperation in the services sector for human resource development (HRD), joint promotion activities to attract FDI in the services sector, and the exchange of best practices.



### **A.3. Investment Environment**

14. ASEAN aims to enhance further its attractiveness as an investment destination globally through the establishment of an open, transparent and predictable investment regime in the region. The improvement in the investment environment in ASEAN is being achieved through the implementation of the ASEAN Comprehensive Investment Agreement (ACIA), which (i) provides for progressive liberalisation of existing investment restrictions in manufacturing, agriculture, fishery, forestry and mining and the services incidental to these sectors; (ii) significantly strengthens investment protection; and (iii) ensures transparency of investment laws, regulations and administrative guidelines.
15. Strategic measures include the following:
  - i. Complete the built-in agenda of the ACIA, including the effective implementation of the modality on the elimination or improvement of investment restrictions and impediments;
  - ii. Identify appropriate approaches or mechanisms for the phasing out and/or reduction of the ACIA Reservation Lists;
  - iii. Continue to undertake and, where necessary, enhance the Coordinating Committee on Investment (CCI) Peer Review Mechanism; and
  - iv. Continue to undertake joint promotion of ACIA, as well as of ASEAN as an investment destination.

### **A.4. Financial Integration, Financial Inclusion, and Financial Stability**

16. Ensuring that the financial sector is inclusive and stable remains a key goal of regional economic integration. The financial sector integration vision for 2025 encompasses three strategic objectives, namely financial integration, financial inclusion, and financial stability, and three cross-cutting areas (Capital Account Liberalisation, Payment and Settlement Systems, and Capacity Building).
17. Strategic measures include the following:
  - i. Strengthen financial integration to facilitate intra-ASEAN trade and investment by increasing the role of ASEAN indigenous banks, having more integrated insurance markets, and having more connected capital markets. These will be supported by robust financial market infrastructure that is safe, cost-efficient, and more connected. Financial liberalisation will be undertaken with greater regulatory cohesiveness to keep requirements for regulatory

compliance to a minimum to reduce costs, while remaining prudent. The key measures are as follows:

- a. Further commit to liberalise financial services sector through the ATISA, which will serve as a platform to link financial markets within the region and with Dialogue Partners;
  - b. Provide greater market access and operational flexibility for Qualified ASEAN Banks (QABs) through the ASEAN Banking Integration Framework (ABIF), based on each country's readiness and on a reciprocal basis, thereby reducing gaps in market access and operational flexibility across ASEAN;
  - c. Promote deeper penetration in insurance markets through the ASEAN Insurance Integration Framework (AIIF), with greater risk diversification, deeper underwriting capacity, improved and strengthened insurance sector supervision and regulatory frameworks;
  - d. Further deepen and interlink capital markets by progressing towards more connectivity in clearing settlement and custody linkages to facilitate investment in the region, and allow investors and issuers to tap cross-border ASEAN capital markets efficiently, in line with the objective of ASEAN Capital Market Infrastructure (ACMI) Blueprint. This will ensure that the benefits of such connectivity are shared by all ASEAN Member States; and
  - e. Promote the development of sovereign bond markets as well as corporate issuances that will diversify risks from the banking system and provide savers with greater opportunities to invest.
- ii. Promote financial inclusion to deliver financial products and services to a wider community that is under-served, including MSMEs. This would also include initiatives to address the uneven digital gap in the region and reflect changes in the demographic structure, as some countries become aging societies. Key measures are as follows:
    - a. Enhance the financing ecosystem in the region to benefit MSMEs, including through cross-collaboration among various working groups in ASEAN. Initiatives to be explored may include the establishment of credit bureaus to facilitate the MSMEs in establishing credit standing to improve access to financing, credit guarantee institutions to provide credit enhancement to MSMEs that do not have collateral, other appropriate facilities or mechanisms that will provide financial access for MSMEs, as well as debt resolution agencies to assist distressed but viable MSMEs;

- b. Expand the scope of financial access and literacy, as well as intermediary and distribution facilities, such as digital payment services to promote cost-reducing technologies and the development of financial services for smaller firms and lower-income groups. Enhance discussion channels in ASEAN to develop best practices and exchange information as well as strengthen cooperation;
      - c. Intensify the implementation of financial education programmes and consumer protection mechanisms to bolster financial management capacity and encourage take up of financial services. These include raising awareness of personal safeguard measures against deceptive practices as well as enhancing technical countermeasures against threats of digital fraud; and
      - d. Promote the expansion of distribution channels which improve access to and reduce cost of financial services, including mobile technology and microinsurance.
    - iii. Ensure financial stability through the continuous strengthening of regional infrastructure, particularly in times of regional stress. Key measures are as follows:
      - a. Intensify the existing process of macroeconomic and financial surveillance through identifying financial system risks and vulnerabilities, and intensifying exchange of key macroeconomic information among monetary and fiscal authorities. Discussions may complement ongoing efforts by the Financial Stability Board (FSB) at the global level;
      - b. Further enhance cross-border cooperative arrangements in relation to the implementation of the ABIF with the emergence of regionally active banks during both crisis and in the normal course of business. In the near term, existing regional and bilateral cooperation platforms for macro-surveillance and supervision will continue to perform an integral role. Furthermore, closer dialogues between authorities may be achieved through regional supervisory colleges; and
      - c. Make prudential regulations more cohesive, aimed at achieving greater consistency with international best practices and regulatory standards.
18. The measures under the three key cross-cutting areas are as follows:
- i. Enhance capital account liberalisation to encourage greater flows of capital among ASEAN Member States to facilitate cross-border

investment and lending in the region, following these guiding principles:

- a. Ensure an orderly capital account liberalisation, consistent with ASEAN Member States' national agenda and the readiness of their economies;
  - b. Allow adequate safeguards measures against potential macroeconomic instability and systemic risks that may arise from the liberalisation process, including the right to adopt the necessary measures to ensure macroeconomic and financial stability; and
  - c. Ensure the benefits of liberalisation are shared by all ASEAN Member States. ASEAN will continue to monitor the progress of capital account liberalisation among ASEAN Member States by utilising the ASEAN Capital Account Liberalisation Heatmap and Individual Milestones Blueprint.
- ii. Payment and Settlement Systems will be further enhanced in several areas such as promoting standardisation and developing settlement infrastructure for cross-border trade, remittance, retail payment systems and capital markets. This will provide an enabling environment to promote regional linkages and payment systems that are safe, efficient and competitive. This will also require a certain level of harmonisation of standards and market practices based on international best practices (such as ISO 20022) to foster stability and efficiency within as well as outside the region.
  - iii. Capacity Building will help to narrow the financial development gap in the region. This can be achieved through the conduct of learning programmes and exchanges of knowledge and experiences, and best practices in areas relevant to financial integration and development, such as financial regulation and supervision, financial inclusion, and payment and settlement systems.

#### **A.5. Facilitating Movement of Skilled Labour and Business Visitors**

19. The objective of facilitating the movement of skilled labour in ASEAN began with MRAs that would allow practitioners in eight professions to practice in other ASEAN Member States through mutual recognition of their qualifications and, where appropriate, through the implementation of the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (AQRF), for which referencing by the ASEAN Member States is voluntary, to support lifelong learning and enhance recognition and the ASEAN Agreement on Movement of Natural Persons (MNP). These arrangements aim to facilitate the temporary cross-border movement of natural persons and

business visitors engaged in the conduct of trade in goods, trade in services, and investment.

20. Strategic measures include the following:
  - i. Expand and deepen commitments under the ASEAN Agreement on MNP where appropriate; and
  - ii. Reduce, if not standardise, documentation requirements.
21. If necessary, ASEAN will consider further improvements to existing MRAs and consider the feasibility of additional new MRAs to facilitate the mobility of professionals and skilled labour in the region.

#### **A.6. Enhancing Participation in Global Value Chains**

22. The broader objective of becoming a highly integrated and cohesive economy is to enhance the region's participation in global value chains (GVCs). The benefits entailed from deep regional integration include better realisation of economies of scale, collective efficiency and the organic formation of regional innovation systems.
23. Regional value chains are not mutually exclusive from GVCs. However, the development and strengthening of regional value chains, as facilitated by the formation of a highly integrated and cohesive economy, is a key way to enhance ASEAN's GVC participation but is not an alternative. For newer ASEAN Member States, participation in regional value chains can also act as a stepping-stone to their integration into GVCs. For more developed ASEAN Member States, becoming leaders in regional value chains is a stepping-stone towards leading at the global level.
24. The other elements in Characteristics 1 and 2 could contribute to enhancing ASEAN Member States' GVC participation either through the removal of formal restrictions (market access and discriminatory measures) or better trade facilitation and regulatory coherence. A more strategic approach to GVCs can also be pursued through specific initiatives such as:
  - i. Regional branding, roadshows and other joint marketing strategy;
  - ii. Trade facilitation initiatives focusing on both imports and exports;
  - iii. Harmonisation with international standards and support for standards compliance capacity building;
  - iv. Better information sharing; and
  - v. Greater focus on connectivity, lessening the trade restrictive effects and costs of NTMs, and domestic regulatory reform.

## **B. A Competitive, Innovative and Dynamic ASEAN**

25. The objective of this characteristic is to focus on elements that contribute to increasing the region's competitiveness and productivity by (i) engendering a level playing for all firms through effective competition policy; (ii) fostering the creation and protection of knowledge; (iii) deepening ASEAN participation in GVCs; and (iv) strengthening related regulatory frameworks and overall regulatory practice and coherence at the regional level. The key elements of a competitive, innovative and dynamic ASEAN include:

### **B.1. Effective Competition Policy**

26. For ASEAN to be a competitive region with well-functioning markets, rules on competition will need to be operational and effective. The fundamental goal of competition policy and law is to provide a level playing field for all firms, regardless of ownership. Enforceable competition rules that proscribe anti-competitive activities are an important way to facilitate liberalisation and a unified market and production base, as well as to support the formation of a more competitive and innovative region.

27. Strategic measures include the following:

- i. Establish effective competition regimes by putting in place competition laws for all remaining ASEAN Member States that do not have them, and effectively implement national competition laws in all ASEAN Member States based on international best practices and agreed-upon ASEAN guidelines;
- ii. Strengthen capacities of competition-related agencies in ASEAN Member States by establishing and implementing institutional mechanisms necessary for effective enforcement of national competition laws, including comprehensive technical assistance and capacity building;
- iii. Foster a "competition-aware" region that supports fair competition, by establishing platforms for regular exchange and engagement, encouraging competition compliance and enhanced access to information for businesses, reaching out to relevant stakeholders through an enhanced regional web portal for competition policy and law, outreach and advocacy to businesses and government bodies, and sector-studies on industry structures and practices that affect competition;
- iv. Establish Regional Cooperation Arrangements on competition policy and law by establishing competition enforcement cooperation agreements to effectively deal with cross-border commercial transactions;

- v. Achieve greater harmonisation of competition policy and law in ASEAN by developing a regional strategy on convergence;
- vi. Ensure alignment of competition policy chapters that are negotiated by ASEAN under the various FTAs with Dialogue Partners and other trading nations with competition policy and law in ASEAN to maintain consistency on the approach to competition policy and law in the region; and
- vii. Continue to enhance competition policy and law in ASEAN taking into consideration international best practices.

## **B.2. Consumer Protection**

- 28. Consumer protection is an integral part of a modern, efficient, effective and fair market place. Consumers will demand the right of access to: adequate information to enable them to make informed choices, effective redress, and products and services that meet standard and safety requirements. Increased cross-border trade, use of e-Commerce and other new trading methods resulting from globalisation and technological advancement require governments to find innovative ways of protecting and promoting the interests of consumers. This will require comprehensive and well-functioning national and regional consumer protection systems enforced through effective legislation, redress mechanisms and public awareness.
- 29. Strategic measures include the following:
  - i. Establish a common ASEAN consumer protection framework through higher levels of consumer protection legislation, improve enforcement and monitoring of consumer protection legislation, and make available redress mechanisms, including alternative dispute resolution mechanisms;
  - ii. Promote a higher level of consumer empowerment and knowledge by addressing consumer concerns as well as enhancing consumer knowledge and advocacy;
  - iii. Build higher consumer confidence and cross-border commercial transactions by strengthening product safety enforcement, stronger participation of consumer representatives, and promotion of sustainable consumption;
  - iv. Encourage consumer-related matters in ASEAN policies through impact assessment of consumer protection policies and development of knowledge-based policies; and

- v. Promote consumer protection measures in products and services sectors such as finance, e-Commerce, air transport, energy, and telecommunications.

### **B.3. Strengthening Intellectual Property Rights Cooperation**

- 30. Intellectual Property (IP) has an important role in contributing to the achievement of national and regional socio-economic development goals. Protecting intellectual property rights (IPR) is critical for ASEAN Member States to move higher up in the technology ladder, in encouraging transfer of technology, and in stimulating innovation and creativity. The approach in the next 10 years will be based on the need to support the economic development in the region through effective use of IP and creativity. National IP regimes should achieve full technical and procedural convergence, and IP Offices have adopted modern business models and practices that enable provision of efficient and effective “world class” services to clients at the national and regional levels. The future landscape will be more competitive and productive as IP is one of the contributory factors towards enhancing the volume and value of exports, flows of domestic and foreign direct investment and improved global competitiveness rankings.
- 31. Strategic measures include the following:
  - i. Strengthen IP offices and build IP Infrastructure, in order to ensure the development of a more robust ASEAN IP system, through the following key measures:
    - a. Improve IP services, particularly in the areas of patents, trademarks and industrial designs;
    - b. Expand work-sharing activities among ASEAN Member States to reduce the workload of IP Offices and duplication of activities;
    - c. Promote improvement of IP services in term of timeliness and quality of output;
    - d. Complete accession to the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT), Madrid Protocol, Hague Agreement and endeavour to undertake accession to the Singapore Treaty on the Law on Trademarks (STLT) and other World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)-administered international treaties; and
    - e. Develop competency-based training programmes for trademarks, patents and industrial designs through the virtual ASEAN IP Academy, with a focus on Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar.



- ii. Develop regional IP platforms and infrastructure, through the following key measures:
  - a. Develop new networks of integrated IP services for the region, including technology transfer offices and innovation technology support offices (patent libraries) focusing on commercialisation and linking existing or new virtual IP marketplaces of ASEAN Member States;
  - b. Improve service delivery of ASEAN Member States through connected online services, including patent, trademark and design search systems, and online filing systems;
  - c. Improve and centralise the management of the ASEAN IP Portal by ensuring that IP information, including statistical data, is accurate and regularly updated (e.g. number of filings, registrations, grants, pendency periods); and
  - d. Adopt information technology (IT) modernisation to improve quality of services, including the development of an automated translation system for sharing of patent information, and regional patent and trademark databases.
- iii. Expand the ASEAN IP Ecosystem, through the following key measures:
  - a. Establish an ASEAN network of offices (IP, judiciary, customs and other enforcement agencies) to enhance effective cooperation on the regional IPR enforcement and to promote building respect for IP;
  - b. Enhance engagement with private sector, IP associations, and other stakeholders within the region and external parties; and
  - c. Increase the capacity of ASEAN IP practitioners through a study on a regional accreditation system.
- iv. Enhance regional mechanisms to promote asset creation and commercialisation, including the development of supporting schemes for MSMEs and creative sectors through the following key measures:
  - a. Improve awareness and respect of IP to promote its protection and utilisation, including incentive schemes for MSMEs and creative sectors;
  - b. Develop IP valuation services to create awareness of the value of IP as a financial asset;

- c. Promote the commercialisation of geographical indication (GI) products in ASEAN by improving the capacity of the productive sector in the development of protection and branding strategies; and
- d. Promote a protection mechanism for GIs and genetic resources, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions (GRTKTCE) and assist in their protection in ASEAN and in foreign markets.

#### **B.4. Productivity-Driven Growth, Innovation, Research and Development, and Technology Commercialisation**

- 32. ASEAN's long-term competitiveness rests on significantly improving ASEAN Member States' labour productivity and total factor productivity performance if ASEAN is going to move up the GVCs. Labour productivity and total factor productivity, in turn, are determined by efficiency in the use of inputs, and advancement of knowledge, innovation and technological progress.
- 33. Given the critical role of technology adaptation and diffusion, as well as innovation in ASEAN's productivity growth and long-term competitiveness, ASEAN Member States need to take a concerted effort to improve their innovation and technological capability. The challenge towards a more innovative ASEAN is in terms of investment in research and development (R&D) and human capital development, and the strengthening of the policy and institutional environment (e.g. IPR regime) for quality assurance, technology diffusion and innovation. Efforts to address the following strategic measures could contribute to enhancing ASEAN's competitiveness:
  - i. Promote strategic partnerships among the academia, research institutions and the private sector towards developing capabilities and creating an effective channel for technology transfer and commercialisation;
  - ii. Strengthen the competitiveness of the MSMEs sector in ASEAN through the application of science and technology (S&T) tools and methodologies; and
  - iii. Enhance the support system and enabling environment to nurture a highly mobile, intelligent and creative human resource that thrives on knowledge creation and application.
- 34. To promote innovation, more attention needs to be given to the development of national and cross-border mechanisms that promote the following strategic measures:

- i. Information sharing and networking to stimulate ideas and creativity at the universities and business-level;
- ii. Place a greater focus on entrepreneurship, and development of business incubator programmes for commercialisation;
- iii. Foster a hospitable intra-ASEAN policy environment for technology transfer, adaptation and innovation, including increased level of as well as supportive fiscal and non-fiscal policies for R&D in both local and foreign owned firms in the region;
- iv. Focus support on the development of research and technology parks, joint corporate, government and/or university research laboratories, R&D centres, and similar science and technology institutions and centres;
- v. Develop and strengthen ASEAN linkages to global and regional R&D networks;
- vi. Promote strong IPR protection in the region; and
- vii. Promote programmes that enhance ASEAN participation in global and regional value chains and production networks, including programmes and joint promotions that attract leading technology firms to set up shop in region, develop industrial clusters and support industries, and improved physical and institutional connectivity within the region and with the rest of the world.

## **B.5. Taxation Cooperation**

35. Tax cooperation serves as one of the key elements to support regional competitiveness in ASEAN by addressing the issue of fiscal barriers. Several ongoing and future measures have been committed to be undertaken, including:
  - i. Concerted efforts to support the completion and improvement of network of bilateral tax agreements to address the issues of double taxation, and work towards the enhancement of withholding tax structure, where possible, to promote the broadening of investor base in ASEAN debt issuance;
  - ii. Improve the implementation of exchange of information in accordance with international standards;
  - iii. Discuss measures to address the issue of base erosion and profit shifting to ensure fiscal health;

- iv. Explore the possibility of global taxpayers' identification number to improve tax collection and enhance monitoring of transactions; and
- v. Explore the possibility of collaboration in excise taxation and information sharing among ASEAN Member States on common excisable products.

## **B.6. Good Governance**

- 36. ASEAN recognises the need to continue engaging the various stakeholders to build a more dynamic AEC 2025. Strategic measures include the following:
  - i. Promote a more responsive ASEAN by strengthening governance through greater transparency in the public sector and in engaging with the private sector; and
  - ii. Enhance engagement with the private sector as well as other stakeholders to improve the transparency and synergies of government policies and business actions across industries and sectors in the ASEAN region.

## **B.7. Effective, Efficient, Coherent and Responsive Regulations, and Good Regulatory Practice**

- 37. The regulatory environment has substantial impact on the behaviour and performance of companies. The drive towards a competitive, dynamic, innovative and robustly growing ASEAN entails that the regulations are non-discriminatory, pro-competitive, effective, coherent and enabling of entrepreneurship, and the regulatory regime responsive and accountable whereby GRP is embedded. As regulations are essential for the proper functioning of society and economy, the challenge for ASEAN Member States is to ensure that they effectively address the identified problem while minimising the cost of compliance to, as well as preventing unwarranted distortions and inconsistency arising from, the regulations.
- 38. Regional economic integration necessitates policy and regulatory changes and refinements in most, if not all, ASEAN Member States, taking into consideration their different levels of development. Indeed, in many ways, the AEC is a concerted regulatory and institutional improvement process for ASEAN Member States. In view of global competition and of social, economic and technological changes and imperatives, ASEAN Member States need to ensure that the regulatory regime is relevant, robust, effective, coherent, transparent, accountable, and forward looking in terms of regulatory structures and design, as well as implementation

processes. In addition, ASEAN recognises the need to continue engaging the various stakeholders to build a more dynamic AEC 2025, in particular, the need to promote a more responsive ASEAN by strengthening governance through greater transparency in the public sector and in engaging with the private sector.

39. Strategic measures include the following:
- i. Ensure that regulations are pro-competitive, commensurate with objectives, and non-discriminatory;
  - ii. Undertake regular concerted regional programmes of review of existing regulatory implementation processes and procedures for further streamlining and, where necessary, recommendations for amendments and other appropriate measures, which may include termination;
  - iii. Institutionalise GRP consultations and informed regulatory conversations with various stakeholders in order to identify problems, come up with technical solutions, and help build consensus for reform. Enhancing engagement with the private sector as well as other stakeholders contributes to regulatory coherence, increased transparency and greater synergies of government policies and business actions across industries and sectors in the ASEAN region;
  - iv. The regulatory agenda may include the setting of both targets and milestones in order to facilitate a regular assessment of the regulatory landscape, and periodic review of progress and impacts in the region; and
  - v. Undertake targeted capacity building programmes with knowledge partners such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and ERIA to assist ASEAN Member States in the regulatory reform initiatives, which takes into account the different development levels, development needs and regulatory policy space of each ASEAN Member State.

## **B.8. Sustainable Economic Development**

40. ASEAN recognises the importance of sustainable economic development as an integral part of the region's growth strategy. Protection of the environment and natural resources supports economic growth and vice versa. ASEAN would actively promote green development by developing a sustainable growth agenda that promotes the use of clean energy and related technologies, including renewable energy through green technology, as well as enhances sustainable consumption and production, and including it in national development plans.

41. Strategic measures include the following:
- i. Foster policies supportive of renewable energy and set collective targets accordingly;
  - ii. Develop a framework to support the deployment and utilisation of efficient and low carbon technologies, and call for international support to ensure ASEAN access to mechanisms that foster low carbon technologies more affordably;
  - iii. Promote the use of biofuels for transportation. This includes ensuring free trade in biofuels within the region and investment in R&D on third-generation biofuels;
  - iv. Enhance connectivity within ASEAN, including through multilateral electricity trade under the framework of the ASEAN Power Grid (APG) and greater liquefied natural gas (LNG) cooperation under the Trans-ASEAN Gas Pipeline (TAGP);
  - v. Identify infrastructure investment requirements to increase production and reduce post-production losses to meet projected future demand and ensure food security, review existing investment programmes and address investment needs in the food and agricultural sectors;
  - vi. Develop new and appropriate technologies, best practices and management systems to ensure food safety and address health/disease and environmental issues, particularly in the fast growing aquaculture, livestock and horticulture sub-sectors;
  - vii. Promote good agriculture practices to minimise the negative effects on natural resources such as soil, forest and water, and reduce the greenhouse gas emission; and
  - viii. Promote forest management involving the community living within and surrounding the forest for the sustainability of the forest and prosperity of the people.

### **B.9. Global Megatrends and Emerging Trade-Related Issues**

42. To sustain and enhance the region's economic dynamism, and be a progressive region with a high quality of life, the AEC Blueprint 2025 will include the formulation of appropriate strategies on global megatrends and emerging trade-related issues.
43. ASEAN would need to engender and maintain an industrial relations environment that facilitates, as smoothly as possible, investing in workers and firms as learning centres for industrial upgrading, and

managing labour adjustments in the integrating ASEAN. This may involve deepening the social dialogue process of shared responsibility and enhanced synergy among firms, workers and the government to ensure greater competitiveness, dynamism and inclusiveness of ASEAN Member States.

44. ASEAN can further maximise the benefits of regional integration and cooperation by capitalising on global mega trends, such as the expanding interconnected global cross-border flows and accelerating technology-digital advancement that are increasingly defining international production, trade, services and investment. To enable ASEAN to seize the opportunities associated with these mega trends, all sectoral working groups will need to proactively consider the impact of these trends and integrate it into their future work programmes. Consultations with relevant stakeholders in such undertakings would be imperative as they are often at the forefront of these trends.

### **C. Enhanced Connectivity and Sectoral Cooperation**

45. The main objectives of this characteristic are to enhance economic connectivity involving various sectors, namely, transport, telecommunication and energy, in line with and in support of the vision and goals of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) and its successor document, as well as to further integrate and cooperate in key sectors that complement existing efforts towards creating an integrated and sustainable economic region, with the aim to maximise their contribution in improving the overall competitiveness of ASEAN and strengthening soft and hard networks in the region.

#### **C.1. Transport**

46. The AEC 2025 vision for transport cooperation will be towards greater connectivity, efficiency, integration, safety and sustainability of ASEAN transport to strengthen ASEAN's competitiveness and foster regional inclusive growth and development.
47. It is envisaged that ASEAN transport cooperation will have to remain focused in the areas of land transport, air transport, maritime transport and transport facilitation, and to embrace sustainable transport as a new key sectoral focus as it has a vital role to play in the sustainable development of the ASEAN region.
48. Strategic measures include:
- i. Land transport: Establish an efficient, safe and integrated regional land transport network within ASEAN and with the neighbouring countries to support the development of trade and tourism, through the following key measures:

- a. Achieve land transport infrastructure (road and railway) integration and inter-modal interconnectivity, with principal airports, ports, and inland waterway and ferry links; and
  - b. Promote concerted and coordinated efforts at policy and operation level to develop ASEAN land transport trade corridors.
- ii. Air transport: Strengthen the ASEAN Single Aviation Market (ASAM) for a more competitive and resilient ASEAN, through the following key measures:
- a. Advance safer and more secure skies in ASEAN;
  - b. Enhance air traffic management efficiency and capacity through a seamless ASEAN sky; and
  - c. Foster greater connectivity, including the conclusion of aviation agreements with Dialogue Partners.
- iii. Maritime transport: Establish an ASEAN Single Shipping Market (ASSM) and promote maritime safety, security and strategic economic corridors within ASEAN, through the following key measures:
- a. Continue to strengthen maritime connectivity within ASEAN through the establishment of ASSM regional maritime transport cooperation and effective implementation of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) conventions towards realising an integrated, efficient and competitive maritime transport, including fostering a culture of maritime safety within ASEAN; and
  - b. Develop strategic maritime logistic corridors.
- iv. Transport facilitation: Establish an integrated, efficient and globally competitive logistics and multimodal transportation system, for seamless movement of passengers by road vehicles and cargos within and beyond ASEAN, through the following key measures:
- a. Operationalise the ASEAN Framework Agreement on the Facilitation of Goods in Transit (AFAFGIT), the ASEAN Framework Agreement on the Facilitation of Inter-State Transport (AFAFIST), and the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Multimodal Transport (AFAMT);
  - b. Operationalise the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-Border Transport Passengers by Road Vehicles (CBTP); and



- c. Enhance capacity and skills development to further progress regional transport facilitation cooperation as well as transport facilitation beyond ASEAN.
  - v. Sustainable transport: To formulate a regional policy framework to support sustainable transport that includes low carbon modes of transport, energy efficiency and user-friendly transport initiatives, integration of transport, and land-use planning.
49. The above measures will prove that by facilitating to expand economic opportunities and services, and providing people with access and mobility, transport contributes to inclusive growth of new business opportunities, including MSMEs, and is a key enabler for the attainment of full potential of regional economic integration.

## **C.2. Information and Communications Technology**

50. Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is recognised as a key driver in ASEAN's economic and social transformation. A strong ICT infrastructure with pervasive connectivity in ASEAN can facilitate the creation of a business environment that is conducive to attracting and promoting trade, investment and entrepreneurship. ASEAN will need to continue prioritising the bridging of the digital gap and ensure that all communities and businesses can benefit from ICT adoption.
51. The AEC 2025 vision will be built upon the successes of the past ASEAN ICT Masterplan. It will aspire to propel ASEAN towards a digitally-enabled economy that is secure, sustainable and transformative, and to further leverage ICT to enable an innovative, inclusive and integrated ASEAN. Strategic measures include the following:
- i. Economic Transformation: Explore the further utilisation and coordination of ICT for economic development and promote digital trade in ASEAN;
  - ii. People Integration and Empowerment through ICT: Strengthen digital inclusion efforts to empower individuals and to enable community development, and explore new ways to enhance Internet broadband penetration and affordability in ASEAN;
  - iii. Innovation: Support ICT innovations and entrepreneurship as well as new technological developments such as Smart City, and Big Data and Analytics;
  - iv. ICT Infrastructure Development: Improve ICT infrastructure and connectivity especially in the rural areas, and develop measures to enhance the resilience of ICT infrastructure, including submarine cables;

- v. Human Capital Development: Strengthen the professional development of the ICT workforce in the region;
- vi. ICT in the Single Market: Promote the freer flow of ICT products, services and investment in the region as well as the lowering of international mobile roaming charges in ASEAN;
- vii. New Media and Content Industry: Encourage the growth and use of e-services and new media in the region; and

Information Security and Assurance: Build a trusted digital ecosystem including through further strengthening cooperation on cyber security and developing measures to protect personal data.

### **C.3. E-Commerce<sup>1</sup>**

- 52. Global electronic commerce (e-Commerce) has become an increasingly vital element of the global economy as part of a retailer's multi-channel strategy. In a globalised world interconnected through ICT, e-Commerce plays a key role not only in cross-border trade, but also in facilitating foreign investment through the supply of intermediary services. E-Commerce has significantly lowered barriers to entry and operating costs for businesses, and is particularly beneficial for MSMEs.
- 53. In view of these potential contributions of e-Commerce to support regional economic integration in ASEAN, ASEAN shall intensify cooperation on e-Commerce building upon Article 5 of e-ASEAN Framework Agreement adopted by ASEAN Leaders in November 2000, with a view to develop an ASEAN Agreement on e-Commerce to facilitate cross-border e-Commerce transactions in ASEAN. These could include, but are not limited to, strategic measures such as putting in place the following:
  - i. Harmonised consumer rights and protection laws;
  - ii. Harmonised legal framework for online dispute resolution, taking into account available international standards;
  - iii. Inter-operable, mutually recognised, secure, reliable and user-friendly e-identification and authorisation (electronic signature) schemes; and
  - iv. Coherent and comprehensive framework for personal data protection.

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<sup>1</sup> E-Commerce is "the sale or purchase of goods or services, conducted over computer networks by methods specifically designed for the purpose of receiving or placing of orders. The goods and services are ordered by those method, but the payment and ultimate delivery of the goods or services do not have to be conducted online," (OECD (2011), OECD Guide to Measuring the Information Society 2011, OECD Publishing)

#### **C.4. Energy**

54. With a strategic theme “Enhancing energy connectivity and market integration in ASEAN to achieve energy security, accessibility, affordability and sustainability for all,” the ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation (APAEC) 2016-2025 will be implemented in two phases, namely, Phase I from 2016-2020 and Phase II from 2021-2025. Strategic measures include the following:
- i. ASEAN Power Grid (APG): Initiate multilateral electricity trade in at least one sub-region in ASEAN by 2018;
  - ii. Trans-ASEAN Gas Pipeline (TAGP): Enhance connectivity within ASEAN for energy security and accessibility via pipelines and regasification terminals;
  - iii. Coal and Clean Coal Technology: Enhance the image of coal in ASEAN through promotion of clean coal technologies (CCT) as well as increase in the number of CCT projects by 2020;
  - iv. Energy Efficiency and Conservation: Reduce energy intensity in ASEAN by 20 percent as a medium-term target in 2020 and 30 percent as a long-term target in 2025, based on 2005 level;
  - v. Renewable Energy (RE): Increase the component of RE to a mutually agreed percentage number in the ASEAN Energy Mix (Total Primary Energy Supply) by 2020;
  - vi. Regional Policy and Planning: Better profile the ASEAN energy sector internationally through an annual publication on ASEAN Energy Cooperation; and
  - vii. Civilian Nuclear Energy: Build capabilities on nuclear energy, including nuclear regulatory systems, amongst officials in ASEAN Member States.

#### **C.5. Food, Agriculture and Forestry**

55. ASEAN cooperation on food, agriculture and forestry (FAF) plays a crucial role in the context of rising population, strong income growth and an expanding middle class.
56. Going beyond 2015, the vision for the FAF sector will be “Competitive, inclusive, resilient and sustainable FAF sector integrated with the global economy, based on a single market and production base, contributing to food and nutrition security, and prosperity in the ASEAN Community,” with the goals of ensuring food security, food safety and better nutrition,

gaining from access to global market as well as increasing resilience to climate change.

57. The following interventions will be considered to promote deeper integration of the FAF sector in the region and the world through, among others: (i) enhancing trade facilitation and economic integration; (ii) strengthening cooperation and capacity for sustainable production; (iii) enhancing agricultural productivity; (iv) increasing investment in agricultural science and technology; and (v) ensuring the involvement of agricultural producers in globalisation process. Strategic measures include the following:
- i. Increase crop, livestock, and fishery/aquaculture production;
  - ii. Enhance trade facilitation, and remove barriers to trade to foster competitiveness and economic integration;
  - iii. Enable sustainable production and equitable distribution;
  - iv. Increase resilience to climate change, natural disasters and other shocks;
  - v. Improve productivity, technology and product quality to ensure product safety, quality and compliance with global market standards;
  - vi. Promote sustainable forest management;
  - vii. Further enhance cooperation in production and promotion of halal food and products; and
  - viii. Develop and promote ASEAN as an organic food production base, including striving to achieve international standards.

### **C.5. Tourism**

58. The AEC 2025 vision for tourism is for ASEAN to be a quality tourism destination offering a unique, diverse ASEAN experience, and committed to responsible, sustainable and inclusive tourism development, so as to contribute significantly to the socio-economic well-being of ASEAN peoples. The proposed strategic directions and action programmes address the core challenges facing the sustainable development of quality tourism and its integration within ASEAN Member States: creating a better balance in the distribution of benefits of tourism among ASEAN Member States, reducing concerns over safety and security, making cross-border formalities more convenient and less costly, and reducing transportation and destination infrastructure congestion.

59. To work towards achieving the ASEAN tourism vision, efforts will be focused on two strategic measures:
- i. Enhance competitiveness of ASEAN as a single tourism destination through the following key measures:
    - a. Intensify the promotion and marketing of ASEAN through its Southeast Asia campaign as a Single Destination;
    - b. Diversify ASEAN tourism products;
    - c. Attract tourism investments;
    - d. Raise capacity and capability of tourism human capital;
    - e. Implement and expand standards for facilities, services and destinations;
    - f. Improve and expand connectivity and destination infrastructure; and
    - g. Enhance travel facilitation.
  - ii. Achieve a more sustainable and inclusive pattern of ASEAN tourism through the following key measures:
    - a. Mainstream local community and public-private sector participation in the tourism value chains at the destination level;
    - b. Ensure safety and security, prioritising protection and maintenance of natural and cultural heritage; and
    - c. Increase responsiveness to environmental protection and climate change.

### **C.7. Healthcare**

60. ASEAN will continue to promote the development of a strong healthcare industry that will contribute to better healthcare facilities, products and services to meet the growing demand for affordable and quality healthcare in the region. The development of the healthcare industry in the region will include traditional knowledge and medicine, taking into account the importance of effective protection of genetic resources, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions (GRTKTCE).

61. Strategic measures include the following:
- i. Continue opening up of private healthcare market and Public-Private Partnership (PPP) investments in provision of universal healthcare in the region;
  - ii. Further harmonisation of standards and conformance in healthcare products and services, such as common technical documents required for registration processes and nutrition labelling;
  - iii. Promote sectors with high-growth potential such as health tourism and e-healthcare services, which will not have negative impact on the healthcare system of each ASEAN Member State;
  - iv. Promote strong health insurance systems in the region;
  - v. Further facilitate the mobility of healthcare professionals in the region;
  - vi. Enhance further the development of ASEAN regulatory framework on traditional medicines and health supplements, through the setting of appropriate guidelines or frameworks; and
  - vii. Continue to develop and issue new healthcare product directives to further facilitate trade in healthcare products in the region.

### **C.8. Minerals**

62. To support the AEC 2025 vision, the ASEAN Minerals Cooperation Action Plan 2016-2025 (AMCAP-III) will be implemented in two phases, namely, Phase I from 2016 to 2020 and Phase II from 2021 to 2025, and would create a vibrant and competitive ASEAN mineral sector for the well-being of ASEAN peoples through enhancing trade and investment, and strengthening cooperation and capacity for sustainable mineral development in the region.
63. Strategic measures include the following:
- i. Facilitate and enhance trade and investment in minerals;
  - ii. Promote environmentally and socially sustainable mineral development;
  - iii. Strengthen institutional and human capacities in the ASEAN minerals sector; and

- iv. Maintain an efficient and up-to-date ASEAN Minerals Database, including its infrastructure towards achieving deeper integration in the mineral sector.
64. Cooperation in ASEAN minerals sector shall continue to involve partnership in policy development and in programme implementation in key measures such as:
- a. Exchange information and develop the ASEAN Mineral Database;
  - b. Promote and facilitate intra- and extra-ASEAN trade and investment;
  - c. Promote environmentally and socially responsible mineral resources management and development;
  - d. Intensify private sector participation and public-private sector collaboration in ASEAN mineral cooperation programmes and activities;
  - e. Foster cooperation with Dialogue Partners and relevant international and regional organisations in the promotion of scientific and technological R&D in mineral resources development and geosciences, as well as cooperative programmes on technology transfer;
  - f. Coordinate and harmonise development policies and programmes on mineral resources;
  - g. Exchange technical information, experience and good practices; and
  - h. Strengthen cooperation and joint approaches in addressing international and regional issues and concerns of common interest.

### **C.9. Science and Technology**

65. Realising ASEAN's intent to sustain its economic growth and to remain globally competitive would be supported by appropriate science, technology and innovation (STI) applications. The ASEAN Plan of Action on Science, Technology and Innovation (APASTI) 2016-2025 and its implementation plan will serve as important reference in identifying, planning and implementing initiatives that will contribute to making ASEAN innovative, competitive, vibrant, sustainable and economically integrated.

66. The vision and various goals of the APASTI would require concerted efforts and pooling of resources to address the following strategic measures:
- i. Strengthen existing networks of S&T centres of excellence to promote cooperation, sharing of research facilities and manpower towards joint research and technology development, technology transfer and commercialisation;
  - ii. Enhance mobility of scientists and researchers from both public S&T institutions and private sector through exchange programmes and other appropriate arrangements, according to the respective laws, rules, regulations and national policies;
  - iii. Establish systems and mechanisms that will increase the engagement of women and youth in STI to promote entrepreneurship;
  - iv. Raise public awareness of the various achievements derived from ASEAN cooperation in STI;
  - v. Establish innovative support systems to promote and manage regional STI enterprise arising from spin-offs and joint ventures; and
  - vi. Establish new strategies for partnership with dialogue partners & other relevant organisations on mutually beneficial projects.

#### **D. A Resilient, Inclusive, People-Oriented and People-Centred ASEAN**

67. The AEC Blueprint 2025 seeks to significantly enhance the third characteristic of the AEC Blueprint 2015 on “Equitable Economic Development” by deepening existing elements and incorporating other key elements.

##### **D.1. Strengthening the Role of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises**

68. MSMEs are the backbone of the ASEAN economies. However, globalisation, advances in technologies and communications, trade liberalisation and the evolution of the production processes pose challenges which need to be better addressed as ASEAN continues to deepen its economic integration. Work has focused mainly on enhancing networking, information flows and capacity building for government agencies working on issues and capabilities building in the following dimensions: access to finance, technology and innovation, markets, human resource development and enabling policy and regulatory environment.
69. A more structured and targeted MSME programme will be instituted to enhance MSME competitiveness, resilience and to enable greater benefits from ASEAN integration. Initiatives towards improved conducive



policy environment for MSMEs and enhanced market-related measures are required to support these objectives, and to drive MSME productivity and innovation as well as inclusive and equitable development, and gender opportunities for micro enterprises and SMEs. In meeting these aspirations for a globally competitive and innovative MSME sector that is seamlessly integrated into the ASEAN community and contributes to inclusive development, the following strategic measures would be implemented:

- i. Promote productivity, technology and innovation through measures to enhance MSME productivity by understanding key trends in productivity; build industry clusters through industrial linkages, promote technology and build capabilities to foster industry clustering; as well as promote innovation as a key competitive advantage through technology usage and its application to business and business-academia linkages;
- ii. Increase access to finance by developing and enhancing the institutional framework in respect of improving understanding and strengthening traditional financing infrastructure as well as the policy environment and measures that foster alternative and non-traditional financing; promote financial inclusion and literacy and the ability of MSMEs to be better engaged in the financial systems; and enhance tax and other incentive schemes;
- iii. Enhance market access and internationalisation by extending and developing support schemes for market access and integration into the global supply chains including promoting partnership with multinational corporations (MNCs) and large enterprises to increase market access and opportunities; promote the use of e-Commerce; and enhancing measures to promote exports through mechanisms such as export clinics, advisory services and ROO utilisation;
- iv. Enhance MSME policy and regulatory environment that promotes intra and inter-governmental cooperation and coordination mechanisms, involvement of MSMEs in the decision-making process to enable better representation of MSME interests; provide support to micro enterprises in the informal sector and their integration; and streamline processes involved in obtaining of permits and business registrations to enable less costly and faster business formation; and
- v. Promote entrepreneurship and human capital development by creating a more conducive environment for entrepreneurship through the ASEAN On-line Academy; and enhancing human capital development for MSMEs, in particular youth and women.

## D.2. Strengthening the Role of the Private Sector

70. The role of the private sector in ASEAN integration is important as a key stakeholder in the process. In the AEC 2025 environment, it is recognised that greater involvement of the private sector and more structured participation will be beneficial to the achievement of ASEAN goals. Private sector inputs and partnerships are essential not only in designing regional strategies and initiatives, but also in identifying impediments to realising deeper regional economic integration. Efforts must be made to engage the business sector and community-based organisations more effectively, both to provide easier access to official information on implementation, and to obtain timely feedback on policies.
71. Currently, there are the ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ASEAN-BAC) as the apex private sector body, nine ASEAN+1 business councils, and 66 business entities interacting with the various ASEAN sectoral groups. The ASEAN-BAC will take the lead in coordinating inputs from established business councils and entities in their interactions with various ASEAN sectoral groups. In harnessing the collective resources of the private sector to enable more effective participation in ASEAN activities and to assist ASEAN to achieve its goals, the strategic measures include the following:
- i. Implement a more inclusive and consultative process involving the private sector:
    - a. Guidelines: Formulate a set of guidelines to maximise benefits from engagement with the private sector. The guidelines may include criteria for the involvement of private sector entities (e.g. demonstration of value-add to ASEAN, leveraging on core competencies, mechanism for involving MSMEs).
    - b. ASEAN Bodies: Relevant ASEAN bodies to institutionalise within each body a consultative process with lead private sector entities (business associations and business councils) as well as ASEAN-BAC representatives to support the implementation of initiatives under the sectoral work plans.
    - c. Business Entities: Private sector groups to initiate cluster groups to engage in specific issues; hold partnership events on key issues, such as trade facilitation, services, investment, connectivity, food and MSMEs to raise issues and provide key inputs on emerging trends and issues.
    - d. Online Networking Forum: With many different bodies and multiple issues, the private sector needs to develop its own platform for networking.

- ii. Enhance ASEAN-BAC's role:
  - a. Composition: Membership to reflect strong linkages with business stakeholders.
  - b. Engagement: Build-in a more structured engagement with business councils/business entities, establish own structure to monitor progress of key initiatives or priority integration sectors of interest to the private sector so as to support the implementation and provide feedback.
  - c. Coordination between ASEAN-BAC and the ASEAN Secretariat: Enhance coordination with ASEAN-BAC by providing regular updates of the AEC; providing minutes of consultations with the private sector; and ensuring ASEAN-BAC recommendations feed into the consultative process with sectoral bodies.

### **D.3. Public-Private Partnership**

- 72. Public-Private Partnership (PPP) is an important tool for decision makers to strengthen economic and social development through the harnessing of private sector expertise, sharing of risks, and provision of additional sources of funding. ASEAN has been seeking to drive the PPP agenda further, particularly for infrastructure initiatives under the AEC and under the MPAC and its successor document. The non-binding ASEAN Principles for PPP Framework's recommendations were adopted by the 46<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Economic Ministers Meeting in August 2014 and presented to the 25<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in November 2014.
- 73. Strategic measures include the following:
  - i. Review and scope the national legal and institutional frameworks that support PPP at both the national and regional levels, with a view towards strengthening the PPP legal and operating environment;
  - ii. Identify partners to provide technical assistance to ASEAN Member States to support an enabling environment conducive to PPP, including the necessary policies, laws, regulations, institutions and government capacity;
  - iii. Identify partners to provide PPP project development facilities and transaction advisory services;
  - iv. Establish an ASEAN network of PPP agencies and stakeholders (legal firms, companies, financial institutions) in ASEAN Member States to share experiences and collaborate on joint projects;

- v. Encourage the ASEAN Infrastructure Fund (AIF) to study ways to act as a catalyst in order to attract private sector funding for financing commercially viable PPP projects that will contribute towards poverty reduction, inclusive growth, environmental sustainability and regional integration; and
- vi. Promote the use of PPP for infrastructure projects, where appropriate.

#### **D.4. Narrowing the Development Gap**

74. The Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) has been a key initiative to address narrowing the development gap (NDG) by providing support to Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam (CLMV) to augment their capacity to implement regional agreements and accelerate the regional integration process as a whole. Recognising that pockets of underdevelopment and development gaps exist in all countries, ASEAN has also continued coordinating closely with other sub-regional cooperation frameworks in the region (e.g. Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA); Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT), Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS), Mekong Initiatives) as part of NDG. The second phase of the IAI Work Plan spanned 2009 to 2015, while the annual CLMV Senior Economic Officials Meeting (SEOM) Action Plans have been implemented since 2011.
75. Having taken into consideration the recommendations in the Mid-Term Review of the IAI Work Plan II and the ASEAN Equitable Development Monitor 2014, the IAI and NDG implementation plan beyond 2015 will focus on the following strategic objectives:
- i. Sustain the pace of economic growth among ASEAN Member States;
  - ii. Strengthen the capacity building in newer ASEAN Member States to implement regional commitments towards ASEAN economic integration;
  - iii. Reduce the burden placed by business regulations on the creation and successful operation of formal enterprises;
  - iv. Building business opportunities for growth and employment, and increasing access to financial services;
  - v. Enhance productivity and competitiveness of rural economies, especially in the newer ASEAN Member States;
  - vi. Emphasise on the development of MSMEs of ASEAN Member States; and

- vii. Identify development donors to provide technical and financial assistance for the MSMEs to focus on potential sectors, which allow them to effectively participate in regional and global value chain activities.
76. Effective engagement between ASEAN and sub-regional frameworks to translate cooperation into concrete and sustainable actions that harness each other's strengths and advantages will be continued.

#### **D.5. Contribution of Stakeholders on Regional Integration Efforts**

77. Enhanced engagement could be undertaken to provide for better transparency of ASEAN activities and progress in ASEAN integration. The stakeholders, including civil society organisations, can contribute to the integration efforts by communicating the initiatives undertaken by the governments on economic integration initiatives to the general public. These stakeholders could also contribute by providing feedback on the impact of the integration efforts on ASEAN peoples.
78. Strategic measures include the following:
- i. Continue to enhance engagement with stakeholders on economic issues to promote a better understanding of ASEAN economic integration initiatives;
  - ii. Work closely with stakeholders towards promoting corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities; and
  - iii. Enhance consultations with stakeholders on new initiatives.

#### **E. A Global ASEAN**

79. ASEAN is continuing to make steady progress towards integrating the region into the global economy through FTAs and comprehensive economic partnership agreements (CEPs) with China, Japan, Republic of Korea, India, Australia and New Zealand. Negotiations to conclude the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and the ASEAN-Hong Kong FTA (AHKFTA) are also ongoing. These FTAs/CEPs have been strengthening ASEAN's position as an open and inclusive economic region, and lay the foundation for ASEAN to retain its centrality in global and regional engagements, where possible. ASEAN Member States are also engaged in FTAs and CEPs with their strategic trade partners to complement the regional FTAs/CEPs.
80. Building on the gains from ASEAN's global engagement and its economic integration initiatives, ASEAN shall work towards further integrating the AEC into the global economy. Through these engagements, ASEAN can seek to promote

complementarities and mutual benefits for ASEAN. Strategic measures include the following:

- i. Develop a more strategic and coherent approach towards external economic relations with a view to adopting a common position in regional and global economic fora;
- ii. Continue to review and improve ASEAN FTAs and CEPs to ensure that they remain modern, comprehensive, of high-quality and more responsive to the needs of businesses operating the production networks in ASEAN;
- iii. Enhance economic partnerships with non-FTA Dialogue Partners by upgrading and strengthening trade and investment work programmes/plans;
- iv. Engage with regional and global partners to explore strategic engagement to pursue economic partnerships with emerging economies and/or regional groupings that share the same values and principles on improving the lives of their people through economic integration;
- v. Continue strongly supporting the multilateral trading system and actively participating in regional fora; and
- vi. Continue to promote engagement with global and regional institutions.

### **III. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW**

#### **A. Implementation Mechanism**

81. The ASEAN Economic Community Council (AECC) shall be the principal body accountable for the overall implementation of the strategic measures in the AEC Blueprint 2025.
82. To ensure effective implementation of the AEC Blueprint 2025, the following strategic measures will be undertaken:
  - i. AECC shall monitor and enforce compliance of all measures agreed in this document. AECC shall also establish special task forces/committees to assist the Council in facilitating resolution of non-compliance related to implementation of measures agreed upon. The composition and terms of reference (TOR) of special task forces/committees will be determined by the Council, taking into consideration the usefulness of independent views, in the monitoring and implementation of the resolution of non-compliance;
  - ii. A strategic action plan will be developed comprising of key action lines that will operationalise the strategic measures in the AEC Blueprint 2025. The strategic action plan will take into account the relevant sectoral work

- plans, and will be reviewed periodically to account for developments in each sector;
- iii. Relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies will coordinate the implementation of their work plans, while relevant government agencies will be responsible for following up on, and overseeing, the implementation and preparation of more detailed action plans at the national level;
  - iv. ASEAN Member States may also access other mechanisms such as the ASEAN Solutions for Investments, Services, and Trade (ASSIST). Notwithstanding the above, ASEAN Member States retain the option to utilise the ASEAN Protocol on Enhanced Dispute Settlement Mechanism (EDSM) to promote a rules-based community;
  - v. ASEAN Member States shall translate milestones and targets of the AEC Blueprint 2025 into national milestones and targets;
  - vi. The monitoring/tracking of the implementation and compliance of strategic measures/action lines agreed upon in the document will be conducted by the ASEAN Secretariat through an enhanced monitoring framework using appropriate approaches and robust methodology. The impact and outcomes of the AEC Blueprint 2025 will be monitored, including with the support of the ASEAN Community Statistical System (ACSS);
  - vii. As may be appropriate, the implementation of AEC Blueprint 2025 will allow for both a consensus and flexibility approach in the decision-making process by economic bodies in certain sensitive aspects. Where there is no consensus or when the need for expedited decisions arises, ASEAN will apply Article 21.2 of the ASEAN Charter;
  - viii. AEC Blueprint 2025 will promote transparency and improve the operation of notification procedures under all ASEAN economic agreements through the Protocol on Notification Procedures;
  - ix. The ratification of ASEAN legal instruments after signing will be accelerated, with best endeavours, within 6 months, subject to domestic processes of ASEAN Member States; and
  - x. Partnership arrangements with the private sector, industry associations, and the wider community at the regional and national levels will also be actively sought and fostered to ensure sustained participation of all stakeholders in the integration process.
83. The next phase of integration will require strong institutional support, further strengthening of ASEAN Secretariat and strategic collaboration with other institutions.

## **A.1. ASEAN Secretariat**

84. The timely and effective strengthening of the Secretariat will be imperative. Efforts to strengthen the Secretariat will be done by, among others, implementing the report and recommendations of the High Level Task Force (HLTF) on Strengthening the ASEAN Secretariat and Reviewing ASEAN organs, as adopted by the ASEAN Leaders at the 25th ASEAN Summit in November 2014. The Secretariat is also expected to continue to monitor as well as evaluate, for the AECC, the progress and impact of AEC Blueprint 2025 measures, tapping on internal resources as well as external expertise or stakeholders, as appropriate.
85. The Secretariat will also continue to assume an active role in the dissemination of information to all stakeholders, and in the conduct of research or other initiatives that are relevant to, and supportive of, the AEC Blueprint 2025.

## **A.2. Other Institutions**

86. The support of and strategic collaboration with other institutions involved in the work on regional economic integration, such as, but not limited to, the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO), the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, ERIA, and OECD, will also be essential in achieving the goals of AEC Blueprint 2025.

## **B. Resources**

87. ASEAN will continue to facilitate the mobilisation of resources from ASEAN Member States, Dialogue Partners and international institutions, in terms of, but not limited to, funding, expertise, and capacity building support to implement the agreed measures.
88. In mobilising resources, in the form of funds, expertise, or knowledge assets, consideration shall be given to the sustainability of efforts, initiatives, or projects, and established mechanisms.

## **C. Communications**

89. Building upon the existing ASEAN Communications Master Plan (ACMP), ASEAN will step up its efforts to systematically disseminate information on the implementation of the various measures under the AEC Blueprint 2025 to the Community, within and outside of ASEAN. The overall objectives are to:
  - i. Bring about greater awareness of the importance of building an ASEAN Community, including the economic community that contributes to the overall economic development, sustainable and equitable growth, and well-being of the people in the region;



- ii. Explain to stakeholders within and outside the region on the approach taken to promote regional economic integration and address any misconception on the economic integration model undertaken by ASEAN; and
  - iii. Obtain feedback from the various stakeholders, through the communication networks, on the outcomes and possible impact of economic integration on the people in the region.
90. The measures, among others, include the strategies outlined in the ACMP such as to:
- i. Celebrate the establishment of AEC as well as AEC progress and achievements on a formal basis within ASEAN and outside the region with high impact events;
  - ii. Promote both ASEAN and non-ASEAN investors to be spokesperson/ advocate to highlight ASEAN's integration initiatives and how businesses can benefit from these initiatives;
  - iii. Promote awareness through regular publication of updates on economic activities and opportunities using online communication, print and other media mechanisms, including social media;
  - iv. Undertake dedicated programmes, including highlighting success stories of MSMEs aimed at promoting awareness among youth, women and MSMEs to facilitate their participation and benefit from the economic integration in the region; and
  - v. Use ASEAN Member States' embassies and high commissions outside the region to assume a more proactive role in promoting ASEAN as a strong and dynamic economic entity.

#### **D. Review**

91. The AEC Blueprint 2025 shall be reviewed periodically as decided by the AECC, but not more than every three years, unless otherwise agreed. Mid-term and end-of-term evaluations covering the periods 2016-2020 and 2021-2025 will be conducted to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes/impacts, including achievements and challenges from the implementation of the AEC Blueprint 2025, with a view towards enhancing the level of economic integration in ASEAN. The mid-term and end-of-term evaluations may be complemented with more regular monitoring and reporting of implementation progress.

\* \* \*

## GLOSSARY

<b>ABIF</b>	ASEAN Banking Integration Framework
<b>ACIA</b>	ASEAN Comprehensive Investment Agreement
<b>ACMI</b>	ASEAN Capital Market Infrastructure
<b>ACMP</b>	ASEAN Communications Master Plan
<b>ACSS</b>	ASEAN Community Statistical System
<b>AEC</b>	ASEAN Economic Community
<b>AECC</b>	ASEAN Economic Community Council
<b>AEO</b>	Authorised Economic Operators
<b>AFAFGIT</b>	ASEAN Framework Agreement on the Facilitation of Goods in Transit
<b>AFAFIST</b>	ASEAN Framework Agreement on the Facilitation of Inter-State Transport
<b>AFAMT</b>	ASEAN Framework Agreement on Multimodal Transport
<b>AFAS</b>	ASEAN Framework Agreement on Services
<b>AHKFTA</b>	ASEAN-Hong Kong FTA
<b>AIF</b>	ASEAN Infrastructure Fund
<b>AIIF</b>	ASEAN Insurance Integration Framework
<b>AMCAP</b>	ASEAN Minerals Cooperation Action Plan
<b>AMRO</b>	ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office
<b>APAEC</b>	ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation
<b>APASTI</b>	ASEAN Plan of Action on Science, Technology and Innovation
<b>APG</b>	ASEAN Power Grid
<b>AQRF</b>	ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework
<b>ASAM</b>	ASEAN Single Aviation Market

<b>ASEAN-BAC</b>	ASEAN Business Advisory Council
<b>ASSIST</b>	ASEAN Solutions for Investments, Services, and Trade
<b>ASSM</b>	ASEAN Single Shipping Market
<b>ATF</b>	WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation
<b>ATF-JCC</b>	ASEAN Trade Facilitation-Joint Consultative Committee
<b>ATIGA</b>	ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement
<b>ATISA</b>	ASEAN Trade in Services Agreement
<b>BIMP-EAGA</b>	Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area
<b>CBTP</b>	Cross-Border Transport of Passengers
<b>CCI</b>	Coordinating Committee on Investment
<b>CCT</b>	clean coal technologies
<b>CEP</b>	comprehensive economic partnership agreements
<b>CLMV</b>	Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Viet Nam
<b>CSR</b>	corporate social responsibility
<b>EDSM</b>	Enhanced Dispute Settlement Mechanism
<b>ERIA</b>	Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia
<b>FAF</b>	food, agriculture and forestry
<b>FDI</b>	foreign direct investment
<b>FSB</b>	Financial Stability Board
<b>FTA</b>	free trade agreement
<b>GI</b>	geographical indication
<b>GMS</b>	Greater Mekong Subregion
<b>GRP</b>	good regulatory practice
<b>GRTKTCE</b>	genetic resources, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions

<b>GVC(s)</b>	global value chain(s)
<b>HLTF</b>	High Level Task Force
<b>HRD</b>	human resource development
<b>IAI</b>	Initiative for ASEAN Integration
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communications Technology
<b>IMO</b>	International Maritime Organization
<b>IMT-GT</b>	Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand Growth Triangle
<b>IP</b>	Intellectual Property
<b>IPR</b>	Intellectual Property Rights
<b>ISEAS</b>	Institute of Southeast Asian Studies
<b>ISO</b>	International Organization for Standardization
<b>IT</b>	information technology
<b>LNG</b>	liquefied natural gas
<b>MNCs</b>	multinational corporations
<b>MNP</b>	Movement of Natural Persons
<b>MPAC</b>	Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity
<b>MRA</b>	mutual recognition arrangements
<b>MSME(s)</b>	micro, small and medium enterprise(s)
<b>NDG</b>	narrowing the development gap
<b>NTM</b>	non-tariff measures
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
<b>PCT</b>	Patent Cooperation Treaty
<b>PPP</b>	public-private partnership
<b>PSR</b>	Product Specific Rules

<b>QABs</b>	Qualified ASEAN Banks
<b>R&amp;D</b>	research and development
<b>RCEP</b>	Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership
<b>RE</b>	renewable energy
<b>ROO</b>	rules of origin
<b>RSIS</b>	S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies
<b>S&amp;T</b>	science and technology
<b>SEOM</b>	Senior Economic Officials Meeting
<b>SME(s)</b>	small and medium enterprise(s)
<b>STI</b>	science, technology and innovation
<b>STLT</b>	Singapore Treaty on the Law on Trademarks
<b>TAGP</b>	Trans-ASEAN Gas Pipeline
<b>TBT</b>	technical barriers to trade
<b>TOR</b>	terms of reference
<b>WIPO</b>	World Intellectual Property Organization
<b>WTO</b>	World Trade Organization



**ASEAN SOCIO-CULTURAL COMMUNITY  
BLUEPRINT 2025**







## ASEAN SOCIO-CULTURAL COMMUNITY BLUEPRINT 2025

### I. INTRODUCTION

1. ASEAN's socio-economic progress in these two and a half decades is heralded by remarkable human and sustainable development. At the heart of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) is the commitment to lift the quality of life of its peoples through cooperative activities that are people-oriented, people-centred, environmentally friendly, and geared towards the promotion of sustainable development. The ASCC 2025 opens a world of opportunities to collectively deliver and fully realise human development, resiliency and sustainable development as we face new and emerging challenges together.
2. The ASCC's strategy and planning mechanism, the ASCC Blueprint, was substantially implemented from 2009 to 2015 and was shown to be effective in developing and strengthening the coherence of policy frameworks and institutions to advance Human Development, Social Justice and Rights, Social Protection and Welfare, Environmental Sustainability, ASEAN Awareness, and Narrowing the Development Gap. More concretely, the ASCC has helped to heighten commitment in the form of policy and legal frameworks, such as the Declaration on Non-Communicable Diseases in ASEAN and the Declaration on Elimination of Violence Against Women and Elimination of Violence Against Children in ASEAN. The region has also shown collective will, for example, in offering quick, tangible action in humanitarian assistance through the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance (AHA Centre). Underlying these initiatives are important development outcomes spurring social changes in the region: the proportion of people living on less than USD1.25 per day fell from one in two persons to one in eight persons in the last two decades; the net enrolment rate for children of primary school age rose from 92 percent in 1999 to 94 percent in 2012; proportion of seats held by women in parliaments increased from 12 percent in 2000 to 18.5 percent in 2012; maternal mortality per 100,000 live births fell from 371.2 in 1990 to 103.7 in 2012; and the proportion of urban population living in slums decreased from 40 percent in 2000 to 31 percent in 2012<sup>2</sup>.
3. Against this backdrop of intensified regional cooperation, the region has witnessed extreme poverty dramatically declining in a number of ASEAN Member States. The region also experienced an expanding middle class, improving health and education, a growing workforce serving regional and global labour needs, a rapidly rising urban population that generates new services, city infrastructure development, and evolving lifestyles. Nevertheless, more needs to be done to secure the benefits and results of progress. Tens of millions remain in extreme poverty. Intra-ASEAN migration is on the rise, from 1.5 million in 1990 to 6.5 million in 2013<sup>3</sup>. Almost 50 percent of international migrants are women, who are increasingly migrating to seek employment opportunities. An estimated one

<sup>2</sup> ASEAN Statistical Report: The Millennium Development Goals (2011); UN MDG Report (2012); HIV/AIDS Regional Report (2012) and Report of the ASEAN Regional Assessment of MDG Achievement and Post-2015 Development Priorities (2015)

<sup>3</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), 2013

in eight migrant workers is a young person between the ages of 15 and 24<sup>4</sup>. Public health scourges of communicable and emerging infectious diseases like drug-resistant malaria and tuberculosis are still a significant presence and threat in a few ASEAN Member States. Millions are still deprived of full primary education due to the lack of access to schools and high drop-out rates. Hunger, as reflected in malnutrition, remains a problem in a significant share of the populace in a few ASEAN Member States. Similarly, a large percentage of the population in a number of ASEAN Member States are very vulnerable to poverty or sliding deeper into poverty from significant food price hikes, as the 2007-2008 global food price surge shows. Progress in social protection, justice, rights, inclusion and identity must also address extremism. A number of ASEAN Member States remain vulnerable to natural and human-induced disasters, which tend to disproportionately and adversely affect the poor and low income populace. Pollution and resource degradation are also increasingly serious problems in a number of ASEAN Member States. ASEAN is also among the most highly vulnerable regions to climate change and will need to find solutions to adapt to climate change in building a resilient ASEAN.

4. Going beyond the current progress in the ASCC and the region in general, ASEAN's experiences, aspirations and destiny will be closely intertwined and influenced by global developments and challenges. As the year 2015 draws to a close, the global community of nations through the United Nations is forging commitment with all its 193 member states to realise in the next fifteen years a comprehensive and far-reaching set of universal and transformative goals and targets for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This will continue and build upon the gains of the Millennium Development Goals and rally broad-based support on addressing challenges to sustainable development such as poverty, rising inequalities within and among countries, violent extremism and natural resource depletion and climate change among many others.
5. Thus, at this critical juncture for the ASEAN Community, cognisant of the challenges and opportunities regionally and globally, the ASCC 2025 vision is for an ASEAN Community that engages and benefits the peoples and is inclusive, sustainable, resilient, and dynamic. It aims to realise:
  - 5.1. A committed, participative and socially-responsible community through an accountable and inclusive mechanism for the benefit of all ASEAN peoples, upheld by the principles of good governance;
  - 5.2. An inclusive community that promotes high quality of life, equitable access to opportunities for all and promotes and protects human rights of women, children, youths, the elderly/older persons, persons with disabilities, migrant workers, and vulnerable and marginalised groups;

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<sup>4</sup> UNDESA, 2013

- 5.3. A sustainable community that promotes social development and environmental protection through effective mechanisms to meet the current and future needs of the peoples;
- 5.4. A resilient community with enhanced capacity and capability to adapt and respond to social and economic vulnerabilities, disasters, climate change as well as emerging threats, and challenges; and
- 5.5. A dynamic and harmonious community that is aware and proud of its identity, culture, and heritage with the strengthened ability to innovate and proactively contribute to the global community.

## **II. CHARACTERISTICS AND ELEMENTS OF ASEAN SOCIO-CULTURAL COMMUNITY BLUEPRINT 2025**

### **A. ENGAGES AND BENEFITS THE PEOPLE**

6. The ASEAN Community shall be characterised as one that engages and benefits its peoples, upheld by the principles of good governance.
7. It focuses on multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder engagements, including Dialogue and Development Partners, sub-regional organisations, academia, local governments in provinces, townships, municipalities and cities, private-public partnerships, community engagement, tripartite engagement with the labour sector, social enterprises, government organisation, non-governmental organisation, civil society organisation (GO-NGO/CSO) engagement, corporate social responsibility (CSR), inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue, with emphasis on raising and sustaining awareness and caring societies of ASEAN, as well as deepening the sense of ASEAN identity.
8. The objective is to enhance commitment, participation and social responsibility of ASEAN peoples through an accountable and engaging mechanism for the benefit of all, towards a community of engaged and empowered ASEAN peoples who are provided the platforms to participate in ASEAN processes as well as to enjoy the benefits from the various initiatives.
9. The key result areas and corresponding strategic measures are as follows:

#### **A.1. Engaged Stakeholders in ASEAN processes**

##### Strategic Measures

- i. Institutionalise ASEAN policies on relevant stakeholders' consultations and engagement in the work of ASEAN Organs and Bodies including policy making initiatives, integration of impact assessment into policy development, programme development, implementation and monitoring, among others; and

- ii. Promote partnership frameworks and guidelines in engaging the stakeholders for the effective implementation of ASEAN initiatives and promotion of public awareness of ASCC programmes and accomplishments.

## **A.2. Empowered People and Strengthened Institutions**

### Strategic Measures

- i. Increase competencies and resilience of relevant stakeholders with advanced technological and managerial skills so as to improve institutional capacity to address current challenges and emerging trends, such as disasters, pandemics and climate change;
- ii. Harness the use of information and communication technologies across different age groups as a means to connect with the regional and global community;
- iii. Promote participation of local governments/authorities, provinces, townships, municipalities and cities through the central government in the development of ASEAN capacity building programmes that benefit their respective communities;
- iv. Promote non-discriminatory laws, policies and practices by developing effective, responsive, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels;
- v. Strengthen civil service through effective capacity building, human resource development and collaboration programmes among ASEAN Member States;
- vi. Promote ASEAN awareness among government officials, students, children, youths and all stakeholders as part of building ASEAN identity; and
- vii. Work towards achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

## **B. INCLUSIVE**

10. In realising the overarching goals of an ASEAN Community 2025, the ASCC is envisioned to move towards a more inclusive community. This would entail the promotion of equitable access to opportunities for ASEAN peoples, and the promotion and protection of human rights of women, children, youths, the elderly/older persons, persons with disabilities, migrant workers, ethnic minority groups, and vulnerable and marginalised groups, throughout their life cycle, guided by a life-cycle approach and adhering to rights-based principles in the promotion of ASEAN policies and programmes in the ASCC Pillar.

11. Complementing the inclusive growth agenda of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), this Characteristic focuses on addressing the concerns of all peoples of ASEAN on matters related to welfare, social protection, women empowerment, gender equality, promotion and protection of human rights, equitable access to opportunities, poverty eradication, health, decent work, education and information.
12. The objective of this Characteristic is an inclusive ASEAN Community that promotes an improved quality of life, addresses barriers to the enjoyment of equitable access to opportunities by ASEAN peoples, and that promotes and protects human rights.
13. The key result areas and corresponding strategic measures are as follows:

### **B.1. Reducing Barriers**

#### Strategic Measures

- i. Reduce inequality and promote equitable access to social protection and enjoyment of human rights by all and participation in societies, such as developing and implementing frameworks, guidelines and mechanisms for elimination of all forms of discrimination, violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect;
- ii. Provide guidelines for quality care and support for women, children, youths, the elderly/older persons, persons with disabilities, migrant workers, ethnic minority groups, and vulnerable and marginalised groups;
- iii. Provide regional mechanisms to promote access to information and communication technologies for all;
- iv. Promote regional cooperation initiatives to support ASEAN Member States in implementing the Bali Declaration on the Enhancement of the Role and Participation of the Persons with Disabilities in ASEAN Community and the ASEAN Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2011-2020); and
- v. Promote regional cooperation initiatives to support ASEAN Member States to be well prepared for ageing society.

### **B.2. Equitable Access for All**

#### Strategic Measures

- i. Enhance regional platforms to promote equitable opportunities, participation and effective engagement of women, children, youths,

- the elderly/older persons, persons with disabilities, people living in remote and border areas, and vulnerable groups in the development and implementation of ASEAN policies and programmes;
- ii. Develop regional strategies and enhance institutional capacity for gender mainstreaming in ASEAN policies, programmes and budgets across pillars and sectors;
  - iii. Enhance effectiveness of the implementation of strategies and programmes under ASCC and promote their harmonisation with those of ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) and AEC, particularly in the areas of social protection, universal health coverage, food safety, poverty eradication, employment and decent work, and trafficking in persons;
  - iv. Provide mechanisms and enhance institutional capacity to promote greater access to basic social services for all, such as health services and education including early childhood education and vocational education, skills training, and promotion of skills recognition;
  - v. Support ASEAN Member States' initiatives in strengthening national gender and age-disaggregated databases and analyses, including on poverty and equity, and establish a reliable regional database for key sectors to support ASEAN policies and programmes;
  - vi. Promote human capital development, economic self-reliance and sustainable livelihood, especially among the poor, through access to education, employment opportunities, entrepreneurship and micro-finance;
  - vii. Promote continuous efforts toward multi-dimensional poverty eradication through multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder and community-based approaches;
  - viii. Build an enabling environment to provide the unemployed, poor and other marginalised groups equitable access to resources, opportunities, and safeguard measures to prevent them from falling under the negative influence of violent extremism and threats;
  - ix. Ensure inclusive, participatory and representative decision making at all levels with special attention to the needs of those in disadvantaged situations, including ethnic minority groups, children, youths, women, persons with disabilities, and the elderly/older persons;
  - x. Promote inclusive growth through appropriate measures at the national level to ensure that the poor and vulnerable have equitable access to economic and other opportunities;

- xi. Promote equitable opportunities to quality education and access to information with priority given to the advancement of universal access to education;
- xii. Promote a community that is healthy, caring, sustainable and productive, and one that practices healthy lifestyle resilient to health threats and has universal access to healthcare; and
- xiii. Promote increased accessibility for persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups in keeping with the universal design facilities.

### **B.3. Promotion and Protection of Human Rights**

#### Strategic Measures

- i. Promote regional inter-sectoral mechanisms towards a holistic and multi-disciplinary approach in enhancing quality care, well-being, gender equality, social justice, human rights and fundamental freedoms, especially the vulnerable groups, in response to all hazards and emerging social and economic risks/threats;
- ii. Promote sustainable financing mechanism for social protection, particularly universal health coverage, early childhood care and development, financial risk protection for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, and social pension, through strategic partnerships with private sector and other relevant stakeholders;
- iii. Provide regional platforms for dialogue and support initiatives to address issues of traditional practices that impinge upon the fulfilment of rights;
- iv. Support accelerated implementation among ASEAN Member States to extend coverage, accessibility, availability, comprehensiveness, quality, equality, affordability and sustainability of social services and social protection;
- v. Enhance the effective implementation of relevant ASEAN declarations and instruments related to human rights;
- vi. Enhance regional initiatives to promote and protect the rights of women and children as well as persons with disabilities especially through the work of the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC);
- vii. Enhance regional initiatives and stakeholder participation to promote the elimination of all forms of discrimination—institutionalised or otherwise—exploitation, trafficking, harmful practices, and violence and abuse against children, women, persons with disabilities, youths,

migrant workers, the elderly/older persons, and victims/survivors of trafficking in persons, ethnic minority groups, and vulnerable and marginalised groups;

- viii. Encourage intergenerational relationships, families and communities in promoting and protecting the rights of the elderly/older persons, and providing quality care and protection of the elderly/older persons, in accordance with the Brunei Darussalam Declaration on Strengthening Family Institution: Caring for the Elderly; and
- ix. Enhance regional initiatives in accordance with the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers to improve the protection and promotion of the rights of workers and migrant workers.

## **C. SUSTAINABLE**

14. In moving towards the realisation of the overarching goals of an ASEAN Community 2025, the ASCC envisions the achievement of a sustainable environment in the face of social changes and economic development.
15. The objective of this Characteristic is to promote and ensure balanced social development and sustainable environment that meet the needs of the peoples at all times. The aim is to strive for an ASEAN Community with equitable access to sustainable environment that can support its social development and its capacity to work towards sustainable development.
16. The key result areas and corresponding strategic measures are as follows:

### **C.1. Conservation and Sustainable Management of Biodiversity and Natural Resources**

#### Strategic Measures

- i. Strengthen regional cooperation to protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems resources, combat desertification, halt biodiversity loss, and halt and reverse land degradation;
- ii. Strengthen regional cooperation on sustainable forest management in the context of forest fire prevention and control, including through the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution, to effectively address transboundary haze pollution;
- iii. Promote cooperation for the protection, restoration and sustainable use of coastal and marine environment, respond and deal with the risk of pollution and threats to marine ecosystem and coastal environment, in particular in respect of ecologically sensitive areas;



- iv. Adopt good management practices and strengthen policies to address the impact of development projects on coastal and international waters and transboundary environmental issues, including pollution, illegal movement and disposal of hazardous substances and waste, and in doing so, utilise existing regional and international institutions and agreements;
- v. Enhance policy and capacity development and best practices to conserve, develop and sustainably manage marine, wetlands, peatlands, biodiversity, and land and water resources;
- vi. Promote capacity building in a continuous effort to have sustainable management of ecosystems and natural resources;
- vii. Promote cooperation on environmental management towards sustainable use of ecosystems and natural resources through environmental education, community engagement and public outreach;
- viii. Strengthen global and regional partnerships and support the implementation of relevant international agreements and frameworks;
- ix. Promote the role of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity as the centre of excellence in conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity; and
- x. Support the full implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Targets.

## **C.2. Environmentally Sustainable Cities**

### Strategic Measures

- i. Enhance participatory and integrated approaches in urban planning and management for sustainable urbanisation towards a clean and green ASEAN;
- ii. Strengthen the capacity of national and local institutions to implement strategies and programmes towards liveable cities;
- iii. Promote coordination among relevant sectors to provide access to clean land, green public space, clean air, clean and safe water, and sanitation;
- iv. Promote cities that are child-, youths-, the elderly/older persons-, and persons with disabilities-friendly through enhanced coordination with relevant sectors to provide sustainable and accessible infrastructure systems;

- v. Strengthen positive economic, social and environmental linkages among urban, peri-urban and rural areas; and
- vi. Strengthen policies and strategies for the effective impact management of population growth and migration on cities.

### **C.3. Sustainable Climate**

#### Strategic Measures

- i. Strengthen human and institutional capacity in implementing climate change adaptation and mitigation, especially on vulnerable and marginalised communities;
- ii. Facilitate the development of comprehensive and coherent responses to climate change challenges, such as but not limited to multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral approaches;
- iii. Leverage on private sector and community to have access to new and innovative financing mechanisms to address climate change;
- iv. Strengthen the capacity of sectoral institutions and local governments in conducting Greenhouse Gas (GHG) inventory, and vulnerability assessments and adaptation needs;
- v. Strengthen the effort of government, private sector and community in reducing GHG emission from main activities of development;
- vi. Mainstream climate change risk management and GHG emission reduction on sectoral planning; and
- vii. Strengthen global partnerships and support the implementation of relevant international agreements and frameworks, e.g. the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

### **C.4. Sustainable Consumption and Production**

#### Strategic Measures

- i. Strengthen public-private partnerships to promote the adoption of environmentally-sound technologies for maximising resource efficiency;
- ii. Promote environmental education (including eco-school practice), awareness, and capacity to adopt sustainable consumption and green lifestyle at all levels;

- iii. Enhance capacity of relevant stakeholders to implement sound waste management and energy efficiency; and
- iv. Promote the integration of Sustainable Consumption and Production strategy and best practices into national and regional policies or as part of CSR activities.

## **D. RESILIENT**

17. Integrated, comprehensive, and inclusive approaches are necessary to build resilient communities in the ASEAN region post-2015. Resilience is an essential aspect of human security and sustainable environment which is addressed by integrating policies, capacity and institution-building, stakeholder partnerships in disaster risk reduction, humanitarian assistance, and community empowerment, among others. Resilience has to be inclusive, non-discriminatory and incorporates market and technology-based policies, including contributions from the private sector as well as the scientific and academic communities. Through the Declaration on Institutionalising the Resilience of ASEAN and its Communities and Peoples to Disasters and Climate Change adopted during the 26th ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 27 April 2015, the Leaders committed “to forge a more resilient future by reducing existing disaster and climate-related risks, preventing the generation of new risks and adapting to a changing climate through the implementation of economic, social, cultural, physical, and environmental measures which address exposure and vulnerability, and thus strengthen resilience.”
18. The objective of this Characteristic is to achieve an enhanced capacity to collectively respond and adapt to current challenges and emerging threats. This recognises that socio-cultural resilience has cross-pillar linkages within the ASEAN Community as an effective force for moderation for the common good, and one that is prepared for natural and human-induced disasters, and socio-economic crises, while fully embracing the principles of comprehensive security.
19. The key result areas and corresponding strategic measures are as follows:

### **D.1. A Disaster Resilient ASEAN that is able to Anticipate, Respond, Cope, Adapt, and Build Back Better, Smarter, and Faster**

#### Strategic Measures

- i. Enhance regional mechanisms and capacities to enable ASEAN to respond together to disasters within and outside the region;
- ii. Promote regional standards, including methodologies and tools to assess, record, calculate the disaster losses and damages, and share non-sensitive data and create common information system,

to enhance interoperability, ensure unity of action, and strengthen resilience;

- iii. Promote local communities' resilience by integrating principles of resilience in risk reduction, preparedness, response, recovery, and rehabilitation measures;
- iv. Promote policy coherence and interlinkages, and synergise initiatives on disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and mitigation, humanitarian actions and sustainable development;
- v. Institutionalise resilience by strengthening institutional and adaptive capacities to reduce existing risks and prevent future risks;
- vi. Harness local wisdom and traditional knowledge to foster a culture of resilience; and
- vii. Enhance capacity, technology and community resilience to the impact of unexploded ordnance on the livelihood of people, especially the vulnerable groups in rural areas.

## **D.2. A Safer ASEAN that is able to Respond to all Health-related Hazards including Biological, Chemical, and Radiological-nuclear, and Emerging Threats**

### Strategic Measures

- i. Strengthen health systems to be resilient in preparedness for effective response to health-related hazards, including biological, chemical, radiological-nuclear hazards and emerging threats;
- ii. Promote regional standards to enhance interoperability, ensure unity of action and strengthen collective resilience; and
- iii. Enhance institutional and human capacities and approaches to support the effective implementation of policies, strategies and programmes in preparing and responding to all health-related hazards and emerging threats.

## **D.3. A Climate Adaptive ASEAN with Enhanced Institutional and Human Capacities to Adapt to the Impacts of Climate Change**

### Strategic Measures

- i. Expand regional cross-sectoral platforms and establish shared strategies to respond to the impacts of climate change;

- ii. Promote sound scientific and evidence-based policies on climate change adaptation; and
- iii. Promote and consider indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices in responding and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

**D.4. Strengthened Social Protection for Women, Children, Youths, the Elderly/Older Persons, Persons with Disabilities, Ethnic Minority Groups, Migrant Workers, Vulnerable and Marginalised Groups, and People Living in At-risk Areas, including People Living in Remote and Border Areas and Climate Sensitive Areas, to Reduce Vulnerabilities in Times of Climate Change-related Crises, Disasters and other Environmental Changes**

Strategic Measures

- i. Encourage risk and vulnerability assessments and other scientific and evidence-based measures for policies and plans to ensure targeted response measures; and
- ii. Establish platforms to empower people living in at-risk areas to become resilient by reducing their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters.

**D.5. Enhanced and Optimised Financing Systems, Food, Water, Energy Availability, and other Social Safety Nets in Times of Crises by making Resources more Available, Accessible, Affordable and Sustainable**

Strategic Measures

- i. Enhance cross-sectoral and cross-pillar coordination to ensure food adequacy and accessibility at the household level, especially vulnerable households, and ability to cope with disaster, food price shocks and scarcity by developing adaptive mechanisms and strategies;
- ii. Enhance cross-sectoral and cross-pillar coordination to ensure availability and accessibility of affordable energy services at the household level and promote utilisation of renewable energy and green technologies;
- iii. Enhance cross-sectoral and cross-pillar coordination to ensure availability of clean water, sanitation facilities and electricity to households in times of crises;

- iv. Enhance the targeting of poor, vulnerable and marginalised groups in times of crises; and
- v. Explore the possibility of establishing financial and insurance mechanisms and strategies for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.

## **D.6. Endeavour towards a “Drug-Free” ASEAN**

### Strategic Measures

- i. Support the coordination with relevant stakeholders in policy formulation, develop and implement preventive programmes for different target groups, adopt and utilise effective treatment and rehabilitation and after-care programmes, and research on drug abuse problems; and
- ii. Enhance community awareness and social responsibility on the ill-effects of dangerous drugs through community engagement, advocacy and other relevant activities.

## **E. DYNAMIC**

- 20. The objective of this Characteristic is to strengthen the ability to continuously innovate and be a proactive member of the global community. It aims to provide an enabling environment with policies and institutions that engender people and firms to be more open and adaptive, creative, innovative, and entrepreneurial.
- 21. The key result areas and corresponding strategic measures are as follows:

### **E.1. Towards an Open and Adaptive ASEAN**

#### Strategic Measures

- i. Encourage freedom of universal access to information and communication technology in accordance with national legislations;
- ii. Promote a culture of tolerance, understanding and mutual respect for religions and interfaith dialogue;
- iii. Showcase ASEAN to the outside world using various approaches e.g. ASEAN arts, film festivals and heritage programmes;
- iv. Project a common ASEAN voice in global socio-cultural fora and negotiations, where appropriate;

- v. Promote greater people-to-people interaction and mobility within and outside ASEAN;
- vi. Promote cooperation in sports and develop comprehensive and inclusive sports programmes to encourage healthy and active lifestyles;
- vii. Strengthen capacity and capability of both the ASEAN civil service and public sectors to respond to emerging challenges and the needs of the peoples through efficient, effective, transparent and accountable public services, participatory and innovative approaches, and collaboration;
- viii. Provide opportunities for relevant stakeholders for knowledge sharing, which include exchange of best practices and studies;
- ix. Encourage volunteerism among ASEAN Member States to strengthen the ASEAN Community;
- x. Project ASEAN's visibility through comprehensive, multi-stakeholder branding efforts, which are represented by common ASEAN identifiers, such as ASEAN Day, ASEAN Flag, ASEAN Anthem and ASEAN Emblem; and
- xi. Promote measures to ensure a caring society, social harmony and values of humanity, and spirit of community.

## **E.2. Towards a Creative, Innovative and Responsive ASEAN**

### Strategic Measures

- i. Enhance the competitiveness of ASEAN human resources through the promotion of life-long learning, pathways, equivalencies and skills development as well as the use of information and communication technologies across age groups;
- ii. Promote an innovative ASEAN approach to higher education, incorporating academics, community service, regional placement, and entrepreneurship incubation and support;
- iii. Encourage regional cooperation in the areas of education, training and research, and strengthen ASEAN's role in regional and global research network by promoting initiatives and providing incentives and support for research and development, including research publications;
- iv. Promote the free flow of ideas, knowledge, expertise, and skills to inject dynamism within the region;

- v. Strengthen curricula and system of education in science, technology and creative disciplines;
- vi. Encourage and support creative industry and pursuits, such as film, music, and animation;
- vii. Promote ASEAN as a centre for human resource development and training;
- viii. Strengthen regional and global cooperation in enhancing the quality and competitiveness of higher education institutions;
- ix. Encourage the government, private sector and community to develop a system of continuous training and re-training to support lifelong learning and workforce development; and
- x. Promote registration of intellectual property rights (IPR), and strengthen its cooperation and implementation in ASEAN in areas such as food safety, medicines, traditional cultural assets and biodiversity-based products.

### **E.3. Engender a Culture of Entrepreneurship in ASEAN**

#### Strategic Measures

- i. Strengthen the supportive environment for socially and environmentally responsible entrepreneurship, such as mentoring, providing seed money, venture and crowd funding, and marketing support;
- ii. Promote and nurture creative and inclusive social entrepreneurship for youths, persons with disabilities, women and vulnerable and marginalised groups; and
- iii. Encourage institutional and technical innovations in the provision of social services and health care.

## **III. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW**

### **A. IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISM**

- 22. The ASCC Blueprint 2025 is guided by the ASEAN Charter as well as other key ASEAN instruments and documents, which provide the principles and frameworks for ASEAN socio-cultural cooperation and their implementation. Such implementation is also guided by relevant domestic laws, regulations and policies.



### **A.1. Institutional Mechanism**

23. The sectoral bodies under the ASCC shall be responsible for operationalising the strategic measures relevant to their mandate by translating them into specific action lines or programmes, projects and activities as part of their respective sectoral work plans. For strategic measures that are cross-cutting and require collaboration with sectoral bodies from the APSC and AEC Pillars, an institutionalised cross-pillar and cross-sectoral coordination strategy shall be employed where the lead sectoral bodies in collaboration with cooperating bodies will develop their respective sectoral work plans, anchored on the corresponding strategic measures relevant to their sectors and based on the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound) approach to ensure realisation.
24. The ASCC Council is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the ASCC Blueprint 2025 and with the support of the Senior Officials Committee for the ASCC (SOCA) and the sectoral bodies, shall be the principal body responsible for coordinating matters that require cross-sectoral and cross-pillar collaboration. The ASEAN Secretariat shall continue to convene and enhance the Senior Officials Coordinating Conference on the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (SOC-COM) mechanism to provide a platform for broad participation and engagement of sectoral bodies within ASCC and from other pillars (through their chairpersons/vice-chairs), the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR), entities associated with ASEAN, and other relevant stakeholders, including sub-regional organisations.
25. The ASCC Council and the sectoral bodies under its purview shall promote multi-stakeholder engagement to share expertise and resources, transfer of knowledge and technology, monitor implementation, and act as partners in carrying out regional cooperation initiatives of mutual interest. Participative monitoring review mechanisms shall be encouraged.
26. Dialogue partners and regional entities associated with the ASEAN shall be encouraged to support the implementation of the ASCC Blueprint 2025 through mutually-beneficial cooperation frameworks where the programmes, projects and activities are in line with the vision, objectives and strategic measures in the ASCC Blueprint 2025.

### **A.2. Implementation Strategies**

27. The implementation of the ASCC Blueprint 2025 shall employ strategies and approaches that will maximise the role of ASEAN Organs and Bodies, encourage stakeholder engagement and enhance capacity building mechanisms in disseminating relevant knowledge to the peoples of ASEAN. It shall promote the provision of platforms for relevant stakeholders and groups to fully participate in programmes, meetings and other initiatives of ASEAN Organs and Bodies, as well as the opportunities for partnerships and collaborations. It shall also

promote public private partnerships (PPP), social entrepreneurship and CSR for inclusive and sustainable socio-cultural development. It will likewise develop capacity building mechanisms for relevant stakeholders in the ASCC who are able to cascade the relevant knowledge to the peoples of ASEAN. Furthermore, the ASCC will intensify strategies, work programmes and initiatives of sectoral bodies under the ASCC Pillar to narrow the development gap.

### **A.3. Strengthened ASEAN Institutional Capacity and Presence**

28. The ASEAN Secretariat shall also enhance its capacities and responsiveness to support the work of the ASCC and in collaboration with other sectors, pillars, and other stakeholders. Cognisant of the recommendations by the High Level Task Force on Strengthening the ASEAN Secretariat and Reviewing the ASEAN Organs, the ASCC Council and sectoral bodies under its purview, with the support of the ASEAN Secretariat shall take concrete steps to carry out the recommendations towards an enhanced ASEAN institutional capacity and presence.
29. National Focal Points of Sectoral Bodies shall be encouraged to strengthen their coordination with their National Secretariats and ASCC National Focal Points in ensuring timely sharing of information, effective and efficient consultation with capitals and in promoting public awareness on the work and achievements of the ASCC.

## **B. RESOURCES**

30. In keeping with the principles of ownership and enhancing ASEAN Centrality and in order to support the implementation of strategic measures in the ASCC Blueprint 2025, ASEAN Member States are encouraged to provide resources to support, when appropriate, the projects and work of the sectoral bodies.
31. Indicative multi-year and annual budget is necessary to support the implementation of the ASCC Blueprint 2025 to foster the predictability of availability of funds.
32. Sectoral bodies have to ensure financial sustainability if they plan to establish centres to support the implementation of the ASCC Blueprint 2025 or their sectoral work plans.
33. To ensure sustainability of projects and established mechanisms, resources in the form of funds, technical expertise and knowledge assets from Dialogue Partners, International Organisations and other partners, will be mobilised by the ASEAN Member States and respective ASEAN Organs and Bodies. Resource mobilisation strategies would also garner the support of philanthropists from among the business sector and individuals for the implementation of the ASCC Blueprint 2025.

## C. COMMUNICATION

34. In line with the ASEAN Communications Master Plan (ACMP), the ASCC in close collaboration with relevant ASEAN Organs and Bodies and stakeholders will develop necessary platforms, mechanisms, strategies and initiatives to promote awareness and appreciation of the ASCC Blueprint 2025 in order to achieve greater communication impact.

## D. REVIEW

35. The review and assessment of ASCC Blueprint 2025 implementation shall utilise the existing Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system that consists of implementation-focused monitoring system and the ASCC Scorecard. Building on the current ASCC Scorecard, the sectoral bodies will revisit their sectoral indicators to ensure that other dimensions of the ASCC Blueprint 2025 will be considered in enhancing the current scorecard and its indicators, based on accepted regional results-based management standards. An M&E Work Plan will be drawn up that consists of internal monitoring by the respective sectoral bodies and evaluation that may engage other stakeholders.
36. The M&E system shall build upon the ASCC Scorecard used in assessing the progress of implementation of the ASCC Blueprint 2009-2015 and consider the lessons learned and recommendations from the ASCC Scorecard Assessment Results. This shall be reflected in a results framework that will be developed to monitor and assess progress of the ASCC Blueprint 2025. Building on the ASCC Scorecard, the sectoral bodies will revisit their sectoral indicators to ensure that other dimensions of the new ASCC Blueprint 2025 will be considered in enhancing the current scorecard and its indicators.
37. A Results Framework shall form part of this M&E system where higher-order or outcome-based objectives, key result areas (KRA) and indicators are compiled, synthesised and aligned with the Characteristics and Elements in this Blueprint as shown in the Results Framework in Appendix 1. The Results Framework maps and clusters such objectives, KRAs, and indicators in terms of their relation to the Blueprint components. In addition, the Results Framework provides the basis for monitoring Blueprint implementation by establishing the provisional targets and timelines. The matrix also provides information for resource mobilisation purposes by breaking down resource requirements into Annual/Multi-Year funding targets. Such targets may be expressed in funds, expertise, training or other inputs.
38. The Results Framework of the ASCC Blueprint 2025 shall be guided by the following key concepts:
- 38.1. **Objectives:** A specific end result desired or expected to occur as a consequence, at least in part, of an intervention or activity. The blueprint clearly spells out the objectives under each characteristic of (1) Engages

and Benefits the Peoples; (2) Inclusive; (3) Sustainable; (4) Resilient and (5) Dynamic;

- 38.2. **Key Result Areas:** Areas corresponding to the objective where results or changes are expected to occur. Results are changes in a state or condition that derive from a cause-and-effect relationship. The blueprint has specified the key result areas under each objective of the characteristic;
- 38.3. **Key Performance Indicators:** Quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement, to reflect the changes connected to an intervention, or to help assess the performance of a development actor or intervention; and
- 38.4. **Strategic Measures:** Outcome-oriented action statements to deliver desired changes in the KRAs. Outcomes represent changes in the institutional and behavioural capacities for development conditions that occur between the completion of outputs and the achievement of the objectives.<sup>5</sup>
39. A Mid-Term Evaluation, covering the period of 2016-2020, and an End-of-Term Evaluation, covering the period of 2021-2025, will be conducted to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes/impacts of the achievement of the objectives of the ASCC Blueprint 2025.
40. Other appropriate approaches and methodologies, such as systematic collection of data, qualitative and quantitative evaluations, policy analyses, development of indicators, polls and impact studies, are encouraged to assess the impact of policies/programmes/projects arising from this blueprint that may be done at regional and sectoral levels.
41. In support of the SMART approach, indicative result/outcome-based indicators should be developed to measure impacts of the implementation of strategic measures.
42. As part of the M&E system, the ASCC shall also establish a compliance monitoring system for the implementation of all ASEAN Declarations relevant to the ASCC Pillar.

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<sup>5</sup> Adapted from the UN RBM Handbook, accessed from <https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/UNDG-RBM-Handbook-2012.pdf> on 9 July 2015.

**APPENDIX 1**

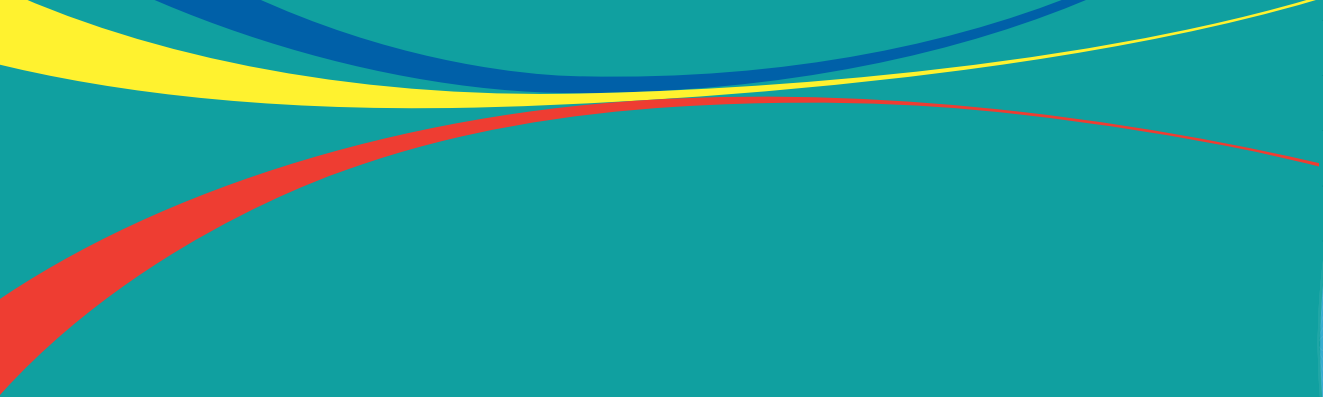
**ASSCC BLUEPRINT RESULTS FRAMEWORK**

Objectives	Key Result Areas	Key Performance Indicators	Targets and Timelines			Annual/Multi-Year Funding Targets Estimated/Projected Amount	Lead / Coordinating Bodies & Cooperating Sectoral Bodies of Other ASEAN Organs
			Baseline data (Reference Year)	Target	Target Year		
Enhance commitment, participation and social responsibility of ASEAN peoples through an accountable and inclusive mechanism for the benefit of all.							
Promote equitable access to opportunity for ASEAN people, as well as promote and protect human rights.							
Promote social development and environmental protection through effective mechanisms to meet the current and future needs of the people.							
Enhance capacity and capability to adapt and respond to social and economic vulnerabilities, disasters, climate change as well as emerging threats, and challenges.							
Strengthen ability to continuously innovate and be a proactive member of the global community.							

## GLOSSARY

<b>ACMP</b>	ASEAN Communications Master Plan
<b>ACWC</b>	ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children
<b>AEC</b>	ASEAN Economic Community
<b>AHA Centre</b>	ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance
<b>APSC</b>	ASEAN Political-Security Community
<b>ASCC</b>	ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community
<b>CPR</b>	Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN
<b>CSR</b>	Corporate Social Responsibility
<b>GHG</b>	Greenhouse Gas
<b>GO-NGO/CSO</b>	Government Organisation, Non-Governmental Organisation, Civil Society Organisation
<b>IPR</b>	Intellectual Property Rights
<b>KRA</b>	Key Result Areas
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>PPP</b>	Public Private Partnerships
<b>SMART</b>	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound
<b>SOCA</b>	Senior Officials Committee for the ASCC
<b>SOC-COM</b>	Senior Officials Coordinating Conference on the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community
<b>UNDESA</b>	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
<b>UNFCCC</b>	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change





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