



Concept Note

Second S Rajaratnam Endowment – ASEAN Community Forum 23-4 August 2017, Singapore

Background

During the 27th ASEAN Summit, the ASEAN leaders adopted the ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together document as the reference for the next chapter of ASEAN community building efforts. The document contains the blueprints of the ASEAN Political Security Community (APSC) 2025, ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) 2025, and ASEAN Social Cultural Community (ASCC) 2025 which essentially serve as the roadmap towards an ASEAN Community 2025. As surmised in ASEAN 2025 at A Glance, the focus of the ASEAN community building in the next 10 years will be, among others:

- Greater emphasis on the peoples of ASEAN and their well-being;
- Enhance awareness of ASEAN and its Vision of a politically cohesive, economically integrated and socially responsible Community;
- Engage all nationals of ASEAN Member States through effective and innovative platforms to promote commitment and identification with ASEAN policies and regional interests;
- Ensure fundamental freedoms, human rights and better lives for all ASEAN peoples.

The above goals are in principle shared and understood by ASEAN at the institutional/elitist level, but limited at the community and grassroots levels. It remains to be seen whether peoples of ASEAN know about them, really understand and share what is being envisioned and captured in the ASEAN 2025. As pointed out in ERIA report (2015), there are two distinctions of ASEAN identity, i.e. *institutional identity* and *communal identity*. The former is reflected by all ASEAN institutions, programmes and initiatives, and processes; while the latter is about peoples' participation in the initiatives and processes, and about the sentiments of the "we feeling", the "ours feeling" and "we are in this together". Nevertheless, as stated above, the disconnection between these two identities unfortunately remains a challenge.

Responding to such challenges, the ASEAN Foundation has been mandated to perform as a platform to forge more people-to-people engagement/connectivity outside the circles of the inter-governmental institutions. In this regard, through the support from S Rajaratnam Endowment, the ASEAN Foundation will be organising three (3) 'S Rajaratnam Endowment - ASEAN Community' Forums, within the period of March 2017 – April 2018, that all aim to assist in narrowing the gaps between ASEAN's institutional identity and ASEAN's communal identity. The Forums will not only evolve around forging people-to-people engagement, but it will do so in a manner that will also contribute concretely to the ASEAN's key issues and blueprints that matter for the well-being of the ASEAN peoples.

To date, the ASEAN Foundation has organised the first series of S Rajaratnam Endowment – ASEAN Community Forum on 9 to 10 March 2017 which focused on three thematic areas: Rural Development, Women's Economic Development, and Micro-Small-Medium Enterprises. The forum has resulted in increasing and advance the CSOs participants' understanding of ASEAN Community Vision 2025, and awareness of the ASEAN and its development agenda. Also, the CSOs had been able to open their diverse knowledge exchange, and learnt more about the respective characteristics and element of the ASEAN Blue Prints and plans, and discussed solutions and modalities to realise these plans. This forum



has opened up the collaboration opportunity and will lead to the further action plan in order to achieve one collective solutions for the economic dynamism and resilience in ASEAN's integration.

Meanwhile, the second S Rajaratnam Endowment – ASEAN Community Forum will focus on 1). Sustainable Development; 2). Environment Protection, and 3). Disaster Management. These topics will see how different community participants coming from the three sectors explore alliance building and collaboration with corporates and policy makers to come up with solutions for environment and development sustainability and disaster resilience in ASEAN's region

Objectives

The Second S Rajaratnam Endowment – ASEAN Community Forum on sustainable development, environment protection, and disaster management will enable civil society organisations (CSOs) in ASEAN to address the following issues:

1. Discuss the development (needs, challenges and opportunities) of institution and mechanisms for implementing and tracking progress of ASEAN Community Blueprints 2025 in sustainable development, environment protection, and disaster management.
2. Collect, dissect and synthesise the community voices, opinions and interpretations of the respective characteristics and elements of the ASEAN community pillars;
3. Conceptualise an ASEAN communal identity which complements the ASEAN institutional identity;
4. Identify the enabling factor(s) for forging a shared ASEAN identity;
5. Come up with the solutions and modalities to work towards a shared ASEAN identity by 2025.

Expected Result:

- ✓ Overview of challenges and opportunities within ASEAN Countries in developing institution and mechanism to implement the ASEAN Community Blueprints 2025, with particular reference on sustainable development, environment protection, and disaster management.
- ✓ The Forum will result in Work Plan produced by the CSO participants. All the Work Plans which are thematic will be formally and systematically documented, and they will comprise, among others, the following components: how the ASEAN's strategies and blueprints will impact on the life of the ASEAN community within the thematic areas, the real challenges facing ASEAN integration and ASEAN 2025 and how the sectoral community/ CSOs think such challenges can be addressed, and how the CSOs may integrate ASEAN's strategies into their organizational planning and activities;
- ✓ The ASEAN Foundation will document the results and solutions of the Forum and share them with existing coordination mechanisms that already exist at the ASEAN Secretariat to ensure follow through among relevant ASEAN bodies. The ASEAN Foundation will publish the Forum's results and solutions that will be made available on the ASEAN Foundation's website. The ASEAN Foundation may also use creative and strategic recommendations from the Forum as the basis for the consideration of ASEAN's dialogue partners to support to help with the strengthening of the ASEAN Community and the communal identity.



Profile and Composition of Forum Participants

In achieving the objectives, this Forum targets participants from Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) which are one of the primary stakeholders of ASEAN. Their involvement is central to ensure that the ASEAN integration/community building process benefits all as well as to get the genuine feeling and sentiments of ASEAN peoples towards the implementation of ASEAN 2025.

The general criteria¹ for the CSO participants are based on the following:



From CSOs that have promising and relevant capacities for the participation in ASEAN community building process.



From SOs which are moderately exposed to ASEAN issues, to ensure that they will still gain more from the Forum but not too jaded so that new and fresh community perspectives on ASEAN can be secured.



Be senior to mid-level of the CSOs they represent. This is to ensure that there will be commitment and follow-through after the workshops with regards to the possible project initiatives to be implemented. The respective CSOs are required to speak English fluently. Hence, they can clearly communicate and explore the diverse knowledge exchange in order to come up with one collective solution.

Time and Venue

The second S Rajaratnam Endowment – ASEAN Community Forum will be held in Singapore, 6 – 7 September 2017.

Main Processes for the Forum

PRE-FORUM:

- ✓ Reading materials, including *ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together*, will be distributed to the CSO participants two (2) weeks before the Forum. The aims are to build participants' prior understanding on the issues for the Forum and to secure effective, strategic and concrete contributions from the participants in the Forum so that the intended outcomes can be obtained;
- ✓ Pre-Forum questionnaire will be distributed to the CSO participants to collect baseline data on the awareness and knowledge of the participants about the topics and issues of discussion in

¹ Specific Selection Criteria is developed separately for the purpose of selection by Selection Panel Members.



the Forum. The collected baseline data will serve as a monitoring tool to assess the level of awareness, understanding and acquired knowledge of participants after the Forum.

IN THE FORUM:

Plenary Session	World Café Session	Build Work Plan	Present Work Plan
<p>Introduction to ASEAN, ASEAN process and mechanism and progress made in the region.</p> <p><i>ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together</i>, focusing on rolling out and explanatory of the characteristics and elements of each Blueprint 2025.</p>	<p>World café/individual workshop session in which participants are divided into three (3) Groups based on their respective nature of work, to identify, interpret, understand and discuss the characteristics and elements of APSC, AEC and ASCC of ASEAN 2025, and relate all these to their nature of respective CSOs' works.</p>	<p>Each thematic Group develops initial/ preliminary Work Plan, outlining how the ASEAN's plans and strategies will impact on thematic topic/sector relevant to each CSO's nature of work.</p>	<p>Finalise Group's Work Plan, outlining identified challenges and the essential requirements to build an ASEAN communal identity which complements the implementation of ASEAN 2025 and its respective blueprints by basing it all on the thematic sector in which CSOs are involved.</p>

Forum Agenda

Day 1, 23 August 2017

		Resources
08.00 – 09.00	Registration	
09.00 – 09.30	Opening Ceremony: Opening Remarks, Keynote Address	<p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host country representatives, S Rajaratnam, • ASEAN Foundation
09.30 – 10.45	<p>Setting the scene : Introduction to ASEAN</p> <p>Overview of the ASEAN Processes and Mechanisms, and its development agenda.</p>	<p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambassador Ong Ken Yong. (Former ASEAN Secretary General, and currently Executive Deputy Chairman, RSIS, Director, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies)



	Overview of the ASEAN Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair of the ASEAN Senior Officials on the environment (ASOEN). • ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) • Ms. Elaine Tan (Executive Director of ASEAN Foundation) <p>Q&A Moderated by Moderated by Chong Ming Hwee. EarthLine</p>
10.45 – 11.00	Coffee and Tea Break	
11.00 – 12.15	<p><u>Session 1:</u> Overview of ASEAN 2025 Forging Ahead Together – Characteristics and Elements of Each ASEAN Community Blueprint 2025 relevant to the Three Thematic Sectors</p>	
	Sustainable Development	<p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DIR Ky-Anh Nguyen (Sustainable Development Directorate of ASEAN Secretariat).
	Environment Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saroj Srisai (Assistant Director / Head of Environment Division, ASEAN Secretariat).
	Disaster Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ma. Malyn Tumonong (Assistant Director for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance of ASEAN Secretariat). <p>Q&A Moderated by Moderated by Chong Ming Hwee. EarthLine</p>
12.15 – 13.30	Lunch	
13.30 – 16.30	World Café/Individual Workshop with Coffee and Tea available	Facilitators, Thematic Resource Persons, participating CSOs
19.00	Welcome Dinner & Networking session	

Day 2 , 24 August 2017

		Resources
08.00 – 09.00	Registration	
09.00 – 10.45	World Café/Individual Workshop (continues)	Facilitators, Thematic Resource Persons, participating CSOs
10.45 – 11.00	Coffee and Tea Break	



11.00 – 12.15	Presentation on Work Plan – First Group Followed by Floor Discussion – inputs from audience – Wrap Up of Work Plan First Group	CSO Group Theme: Sustainable Development, Facilitators, Thematic Resource Persons, Moderator
12.15 – 13.30	Lunch	
13.30 – 14.45	Presentation on Work Plan – Second Group Followed by Floor Discussion – inputs from audience – Wrap Up of Work Plan Second Group	CSO Group Theme: Environmental Protection, Facilitators, Thematic Resource Persons, Moderated by Chong Ming Hwee. EarthLine
14.45 – 16.00	Presentation on Work Plan – Third Group Followed by Floor Discussion – inputs from audience – Wrap up of Work Plan Third Group	CSO Group Theme: Disaster Management, Facilitators, Thematic Resource Persons, Moderator
16.00 – 16.15	Coffee and Tea Break	
16.15 – 16.30	Summary of the Forum	Thematic Resource Persons & ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC)
16.30 – 16.45	Closing Remarks	S Rajaratnam Endowment, ASEAN Foundation

Contact Information

- ✓ **Mr. Mahmudi Yusbi** – the ASEAN Foundation
Email address: mahmudi.yusbi@aseanfoundation.org
- ✓ **The ASEAN Foundation’s Media**
Website: www.aseanfoundation.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/ASEANFoundation
Twitter: www.twitter.com/ASEANFoundation
Instagram: <http://instagram.com/aseanfoundation>
