

FACT SHEET

ASEAN POLITICAL-SECURITY COMMUNITY (APSC)



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ADVANCING PARTNERSHIP
FOR SUSTAINABILITY

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one vision
one identity
one community

Preserving regional peace and stability, adopting a comprehensive approach to security challenges and developing friendly and mutually beneficial relations with external and other partners have been the underlying principles of ASEAN's approach to political and security issues and developments.

Serving as the bedrock for peace and stability in Southeast Asia are ASEAN political instruments such as the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), which is a key code of conduct governing inter-state relations in the region; the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) which advocates for a region free of nuclear weapons; and the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) and the on-going negotiations on a Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) which promotes peaceful settlement of disputes and practical maritime cooperation in the South China Sea.

Seven years of implementation of the APSC Blueprint (2009-2015) has cemented the foundation of the APSC by deepening and expanding ASEAN political and security cooperation and strengthening ASEAN capacity in responding to regional and international challenges. Building upon these achievements, the *APSC Blueprint 2025* aims to elevate ASEAN political-security cooperation to a even higher level in line with the *ASEAN Community Vision 2025*.

The APSC has the following key characteristics:

- (i) 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;

- (ii) 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;
- (iii) 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
- (iv) A community with strengthened institutional capacity through improved ASEAN work processes and coordination, increased effectiveness and efficiency in the work of all ASEAN Organs, including a strengthened ASEAN Secretariat, as well as with increased ASEAN institutional presence at the national, regional and international levels.

To build a rules-based, people-oriented, people-centred community, the APSC has consistently promoted cooperation in political development that adheres to the principles of democracy, the rule of law and good governance as well as respect for, promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Human rights continues to be mainstreamed across the three pillars of ASEAN with ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) at the forefront, ensuring the implementation of the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration. AICHR's work has expanded, from promoting a human rights-based approach in cross-sectoral areas, such as trafficking in persons,



The Bangkok Declaration of 8 August 1967 that established ASEAN declared, among others, the following aims and purposes upon which ASEAN political and security cooperation is anchored on, namely:

- ▶ To accelerate the economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region through joint endeavours in the spirit of equality and partnership in order to strengthen the foundation for a prosperous and peaceful community of Southeast Asia; and
- ▶ To promote regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice and the rule of law in the relationship among regional countries and adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter.

The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) remains an important ASEAN-led mechanism for promoting security cooperation in the wider Asia-Pacific region. The ARF continues to develop confidence-building measures by exploring cooperation on emerging security issues, while furthering its primary commitment to promoting preventive diplomacy that contributes to regional peace and security. The scope of issues addressed includes current and emerging non-traditional security threats, such as nuclear non-proliferation; countering terrorism, violent extremism, and other transnational crimes; cybersecurity; maritime safety and security; marine environment protection; climate change; and disaster relief and urban emergency rescue.

It is envisaged that the ASEAN Political-Security Community by 2025 shall be a united, inclusive and resilient community where the ASEAN 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. It is further envisaged that 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.

ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific reaffirms ASEAN Centrality; openness, transparency, inclusivity; a rules-based framework; good governance; respect for sovereignty; non-intervention; complementarity with existing cooperation frameworks; equality; mutual respect, trust, and benefit; and respect for international law as its guiding principles in undertaking Indo-Pacific cooperation. Four priority areas of cooperation were identified: maritime cooperation, connectivity, realising the UN sustainable development goals 2030, fostering economic cooperation and other areas of cooperation.

promoting safe drinking water, and sanitation, and by embarking on civil rights advocacy with regard to freedom of expression, prevention of torture, and access to justice.

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. It pursues peaceful settlement of disputes and renounces aggression and the threat or use of force or other actions in any manner inconsistent with international law. Relevant bodies in the APSC continue to work in addressing non-traditional security challenges including drug

trafficking, terrorism, trafficking in persons, people smuggling, cybercrime, cybersecurity, illicit trafficking of wildlife and timber, disaster relief and pandemics, among others.

ASEAN remains committed to strengthening, consolidating and optimizing defense cooperation to contribute to sustainable security. Possible future contributions include border management and countering illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing.

Complementing efforts to promote an environment where ASEAN's diverse peoples live peacefully and realise socio-economic progress are ASEAN's external partners. ASEAN's



dialogue partners, sectoral dialogue partners, development partners and other external parties are all contributing to realizing the ASEAN Community Vision 2025.

Advanced regional cooperation has also strengthened ASEAN Centrality. The organization has articulated the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP), which was adopted by the ASEAN

Leaders during the 34th ASEAN Summit in June 2019.

Moving forward, ASEAN through APSC, will further strengthen cooperation and advance partnerships to ensure sustainability in all dimensions for ASEAN amidst the rapid changes in Southeast Asia and beyond.



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.

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