



Asian Strategy & Leadership Institute
Dedicated To Creating A Better Society

The 12th ASEAN Leadership Forum
“Forward ASEAN: One Community, One Vision, One People”
26-27th April 2015 | Mandarin Oriental, Kuala Lumpur

DAY ONE: 26TH APRIL 2015 (SUNDAY)

YOUNG LEADERS ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

25th April 2015, Pearl Room, Mandarin Oriental Kuala Lumpur

Welcome Remarks and Introduction

Tan Sri Michael Yeoh, Chief Executive Officer, Asian Strategy & Leadership Institute (ASLI)

Tan Sri Michael Yeoh first welcomed participants and expressed his delight that they could be part of the morning’s roundtable discussions. He shared his views on the future and direction that ASEAN should be headed in the next 10 years - of which the youths would play a major role. He revealed that 60% of the ASEAN population are below 30 years of age, and it is important for ASEAN youths to be inspired as a region that produces significant global impact, with its 10 member nations contributing a total economic value of USD 2.7 trillion.

He said that ASEAN is made up of four fundamental pillars in the form of the 4C’s: *Connectivity, Community Building, Centralisation, and Connectivity*. He shared that it is important to develop ASEAN-centrality - a vision that has been continuously emphasised by ASEAN leaders, and a theme that took prominence during a recent East Asian Summit.

Tan Sri Michael Yeoh also shared the 4I’s of ASEAN: *Innovation, Infrastructure, Investment, and Inclusive Development*. In addition, Tan Sri Michael Yeoh also shared the 4P’s of ASEAN: *People, Policies, Productivity, and the Private Sector*.

He noted that these 4I’s and 4P’s can increasingly drive regional integration. He also advised that the people of ASEAN think deeper about ASEAN, and not only for their individual countries. This change of mindset can better facilitate the integration of people in the region, he said. Instead of referring to ourselves as Malaysian, Singaporean, Cambodian, etc., Tan Sri Yeoh suggested said we become the “Aseanese People”.

Moreover, Tan Sri Michael Yeoh also encouraged the youth leaders to have more ASEAN engagement and to pose questions to participants on how to integrate the ASEAN people with the ASEAN community, as well as asking young leaders to consider what it meant to be ASEAN. He ended his opening address by citing a moral lesson from the recent Cinderella movie - *people should be bold, kind and courageous enough to live out their dreams*.

Opening Keynote Address

H.E. Ms Vicki Treadell, British High Commissioner to Malaysia

Her Excellency, Ms Vicki Treadell, began her keynote address by sharing that the British High Commission was keen to be involved in the development of young leaders. She shared her life story that she was the first British Ambassador born in Malaysia, living in Ipoh until the age of 8 years old. From there, she grew up in Britain, only returning to Malaysia when she was assigned as a junior diplomat. Therefore, she noted that she has genuine interest in ASEAN as it has formed part of who she is now.

The High Commissioner highlighted that the centrality of ASEAN is a global framework. It is in Britain's interest in a stable world reality, emphasising the importance of a strong ASEAN in a global framework. Through her observation, the region is witnessing a shift in power with the emergence of China, while Africa has one of the fastest growing GDPs in the world. Latin America is also increasingly coming together. In a multi-polar world and increasing individual identity, HE Treadell questioned the level of ambition that can drive and form an ASEAN identity, and where lessons can be learned from other nations.

Ms Treadell said she considered Great Britain to be one of the oldest mentors for regionalisation whose experience dates back to 377 years. Great Britain came together as the first economic union which was then followed by political union. However, today questions of identity remain as well as its relationship within the European Union. She further posed a question to the youth leaders on what would they want to develop through the lessons from these unions in relation to ASEAN. Each country has its own sense of nationalism with different diversities amongst its 10 state member, she noted. She also asked the ASEAN Young Leaders to think about the ASEAN identity and if there were common values that all of them can subscribe to.

The High Commissioner asked participants to ponder upon freedom of expression, especially as Malaysia holds the chairmanship of ASEAN in 2015. Other questions she posted to the youth leaders were:

- How should ASEAN counter religious extremism?
- What do ASEAN members mean by values?
- Is democracy part of ASEAN, and why?
- What can ASEAN members understand as the difference in identity commonalities?
- Why have some countries in ASEAN floated in and out of democracy?
- Can a native democracy play a proactive role?
- Is there a role for a native democracy in ASEAN?
- Is that a sustainable model for ASEAN?
- Is there a collective view in ASEAN?
- If youth leaders subscribe to ASEAN values, will they see a failure on these fronts?
- What are the moral and ethical positives of others to say that these are not an ASEAN Values?
- When foreign countries such as Great Britain intervene, it is beneficial for the promotion and value and human rights?
- Through the perspective of family, how does each ASEAN member support each other?
- Is there a place of moderation and tolerance?

In addition, it was stated that ASEAN members should treat each other how they would like to be treated. Beyond that, currently there is a breach of the ASEAN way. To overcome this, Ms Treadell suggested boldness and the need for parameters to be in place, as there will

always be tensions. She said to look at the meaning of eco-integration to further understand the means to resolve tension and adopt an inclusive approach.

Ms Treadell also advised participants to look into protectionism, as certain sectors may not be sustainable to grow economically. She said competition is important for medium and long-term growth. Sectors that are protected can never be globally competitive. She then shared the example of India's telecommunications sector, which was initially a state-controlled entity with much vested interest. It was inefficient and it often took 6 months for a landline to be installed. However, once India liberalised its telecommunication sector, it flourished as a global player.

The ASEAN Economic Community is the fourth largest potential trade area in the world, Ms Treadell noted. She suggested that for the region to be more competitive, it needed to gain new knowledge and be open to new industries. She also recommended that companies reduce their dependency on the government in order to be competitive.

Ms Treadell spoke of the increase in the aging population in China and Europe. By contrast, 60% of ASEANs population is of the working age, as opposed to the aging working class in China and Europe. This makes ASEAN the next powerhouse and it is important for ASEAN to understand its own potential, she said. She revealed that the current economic deficiencies are the lack of (i) access to education, (ii) access to employment and (iii) access to healthcare

Ms Treadell also asked the youth leaders to look at supply chain issues within their own counties. In addition, she implored participants of the RTD to look into the climate change agenda, noting that the Greenland ice shelf is melting, and an issue that threaten us all. She implored the youth leaders to re-define their own values as climate change is a real problem that affects everyone's future. She concluded her keynote address by agreeing with Tan Sri Michael Yeoh on the importance of upholding the 4 P's in ASEAN; People, Policies, Productivity, and the Private Sector.

Presentation by the ASEAN Foundation

Ms Elaine Tan, Executive Director, ASEAN Foundation

Ms Tan began her presentation by providing a background concerning regional integration. She shared that one of the standing legacies of ASEAN is peace and security. Though ASEAN diplomacy has always been "quiet diplomacy", it has given much emphasis toward prosperity.

Ms Tan pointed out that ASEAN offers its member-states regional opportunities which it otherwise might not had have. The most significant impact ASEAN has made is on its people. She shared that in 2015, ASEAN is focused on creating and emphasising social-cultural values.

Ms Tan acknowledged that most people want to know the benefits of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and the ASEAN Security Community (ASC). One of the key highlights achieved is the ASEAN university network programme that was launched in 2012. It aimed at promoting student mobility and cultural exposure among the people of ASEAN. It includes the harmonisation of the credit transfer system. There are currently more than 30 ASEAN universities participating in this programme to promote the "*We Feeling*". In addition, Ms Tan also shared that there are numerous school exchanges taking place within ASEAN.

In closing, Ms Tan gave a background overview of the functions of the ASEAN Foundation. An organisation which started in 1997, it aims are to promote people-to-people collaboratives. She ended by sharing several projects undertaken by the Foundation. They are namely, the ASEAN Puppetry Exchange Programme, ASEAN Farmers Organisation Programme, Reporting ASEAN 2015 & Beyond Media Programme, and the ASEAN CSR Network - making CSR part of business strategy.

Young Leaders Roundtable Discussion

How can the youth help shape a post-2015 vision for ASEAN? How to make ASEAN more people centred? What do you think is needed for the voice of the youth to be heard in ASEAN? What shared values and characteristics do you believe an “ASEAN Identity” should comprise? What human rights issues are being faced by ASEAN? What are the causes and what remedies can be used to eliminate these issues? What security threats are being faced, externally and internally, and should ASEAN stand in solidarity? Should ASEAN have education exchanges and collaboration? If so, what institutions need to be in place?

Moderator:

Ms Ng Yeen Seen, Chief Operating Officer of ASLI / Senior Director of CPPS

Ms Ng began by asking delegates to share what they believed to be the important values and aspirations of ASEAN. The outcome was a consensus over important values such as integration, rule of law, responsibility, trust, peace and moderation, understanding, human rights standards, political stability, cultural diversity, and free market principles. Concerning the future aspirations of ASEAN, many of the participants at the roundtable referred to the role of the youth as an important catalyst for change. More precisely, youth who have a strong sense of ASEAN are more aware and committed, as well as being able to develop a closer sense of belonging, connectivity and desire to contribute to a successful ASEAN.

Many inputs and ideas shared by participants were with regard to the issues and the challenges currently faced by ASEAN. Several participants pointed out that, although ASEAN has done a lot so far for the development of the region, many areas are yet to be improved. The discussion revealed a general sense of disparity between ASEAN leaders and institutions. Thus, several delegates expressed their wish for the ASEAN youth to be empowered and be allowed to be more involved in shaping regional developments and contribute in solving existing issues.

Equally, the participants stressed the necessity of more effective action to be taken when dealing with social aspects and issues, which are often neglected and obscured by economic concerns within ASEAN. With regard to the AE labour market issues, participants remarked on the necessity to develop minimal labour standards, as well as providing safer migration and safer working conditions within the region, while at the same time identified the challenges of integrating such principles into the AEC. When comparing ASEAN with the EU, it was pointed out that although something can be learned from the latter; there are many differences between the two organisations, particularly the lack of a true regional ASEAN identity.

The discussions also underlined the fact that ASEAN has robust geopolitical connections. Strengthening such connections cannot be accomplished by establishing institutions or more regulation alone, but also through improving movement of labour, liberalisation, and

infrastructures across the region. Participants also agreed that forming an ASEAN identity requires time to be eventually, and that the private sector could play a key role in shaping it by effectively promoting a regional market, thus, uniting people in this way.

The roundtable also underlined the importance of cultural diversity as a means to unite ASEAN people, especially the new generations, by allowing them to understand and appreciate the different values present in the region. Another issue raised by the delegates is the one over the fact that although ASEAN leaders seem to be doing very well in the economic field, though with some concerns over national economic disparities, issues and challenges remain regarding social and educational inequalities. Overall, the role of the youth is a crucial factor towards a positive future development of ASEAN.

Opening Ceremony:

Address by His Royal Highness Sultan of Perak Darul Ridzuan, Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah

His Royal Highness addressed delegates by first emphasising how ASEAN is indispensable. The Sultan of Perak also stressed that ASEAN must be relevant in order for its people from all walks of life to enjoy tangible benefits. He revealed that South East Asia is experiencing an inter-generational change as the medium age of ASEAN countries is at 28 years of age. After year 2020, the working median age is expected to be around the early 20s and mid-30s. His Royal Highness said that it is imperative that this generation is empowered with the ASEAN Spirit, mutual trust and co-operation. He ended his address by thanking Tan Sri Yeoh and all the ASEAN leaders at the event for the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Welcome Speech by the Hon. Dato' Sri Abdul Wahid Omar, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, Malaysia

Dato' Sri Wahid extended a very warm welcome to participants. He was delighted to welcome so many Leaders of ASEAN Member States as well as the Chief Executive of Hong Kong SAR to this Forum.

He applauded Tan Sri Michael Yeoh, the Chief Executive of the Asian Strategy & Leadership Institute, or better known as ASLI, as well as his dedicated team of staff for their success in organizing this well-attended Forum.

Dato' Sri Wahid remarked that ASEAN has been the hot topic of discussions in recent times, moving to the centre of attention as the region experiences favourable social-economic conditions against the backdrop of slowing global growth. This no doubt is due to ASEAN potential to become an economic Powerhouse.

ASEAN is among the fastest growing regions in the world, at more than 5% per annum with various factors supporting a continuous positive trajectory in the years ahead. Today, according to Dato' Sri Wahid, there is no doubt on the viability nor the stability of ASEAN.

Malaysia is proud to once again host the ASEAN Summit. The over-arching theme of creating a People-centred ASEAN has gained traction and tremendous support, not least amongst the ASEAN leaders themselves. What is even more heartening is the sheer number of ASEAN-related activities organized not only in Malaysia but elsewhere in the region. Furthermore there are more events organised by the civil society organisations compared to Governmental based initiatives. Dato' Sri Wahid claimed that ASEAN has arrived at a point where the responsibilities for ASEAN governance extend beyond leaders and ministers.

Therefore, Dato' Seri was pleased to learn of ASLI's initiative in organizing an ASEAN Young Leaders' Roundtable, which brought together 50 young ASEAN Leaders to deliberate on future challenges facing the younger generation in ASEAN. The focus on the younger generation is most welcome. Interaction with youth is critical to the success of ASEAN. The young generation must have a greater sense of belonging to ASEAN, with a sense of ASEAN identity and consciousness. This demographic dividend has yet to be realized; but once it is achieved, it will prove a contributing factor in charting ASEAN's future. Thus, we must exercise a sense of urgency in designing policies which will maximize the potential of young people in ASEAN.

Dato' Sri went on to say that ASEAN has enjoyed more than 40 years of peace and prosperity in Southeast Asia. As the 7th largest economy in the world at USD2.4 trillion with 625 million people in 2013, ASEAN is projected to be the 4th largest economy by 2050. Keeping the peace and ensuring the continued growth and prosperity of ASEAN will require all ASEAN member states to remain united, committed to ASEAN ideals, cohesive, pragmatic yet idealistic, visionary and certainly bold. These are the pre-requisite ASEAN march towards greater growth at home, and greater influence in the world beyond its national boundaries. He concluded by wishing all participants a fruitful deliberations and a successful outcome, so that it will inform ASEAN in our discussions and policy-making decisions.

Special Message by the Hon. Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Razak, the Prime Minister of Malaysia and ASEAN Chair (read by Tan Sri Michael Yeoh)

Malaysia is pleased and honored to chair ASEAN in 2015 - the year the ASEAN Economic Community will be actualized. I am also delighted to welcome all delegates to the ASEAN and related Summits and associated events. As Chair of ASEAN, we hope to focus on a People-Centered ASEAN so that ASEAN becomes more relevant to the ordinary people of ASEAN and develop a sense of Aseaness.

We welcome the annual initiative of the Asian Strategy & Leadership Institute (ASLI) to organize the ASEAN Leadership Forum (ALF) held alongside the April Summit of ASEAN. This year the ALF travels from Nay Pyi Taw, Phnom Penh, Jakarta and Bangkok to Kuala Lumpur and will be held alongside the ASEAN Summit on 26th and 27th April 2015.

The ASEAN Leadership Forum has become institutionalized as a leading regional programme, bringing together Government, Business, Civil Society and Thought Leaders to deliberate on the future of ASEAN and to debate the issues and driving forces shaping the future of ASEAN. I believe this year's Forum will help define ideas for a post 2015 vision for ASEAN and that the deliberations at the ALF can be very useful inputs and feedback for the leaders.

I am confident that the ASEAN Leadership Forum will continue to play a useful role in being a bridge between Government, Business and Civil Society. It will also enable the business community to be updated on new developments in ASEAN and the prospects ahead arising from the full implementation of the AEC. The engagement with the younger generation as future leaders is also timely and relevant. Once again I compliment ASLI as well as the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) for organizing this timely and apt Forum.

I welcome all delegates to Kuala Lumpur and wish you a pleasant stay and successful deliberations.

Special address by H.E. Samdech Hun Sen, Prime Minister of Cambodia

H.E. Hun Sen expressed his great pleasure to be a speaker at the 12th ASEAN Leadership Forum (ALF). At the outset, he conveyed his gratitude to ASLI for inviting him ALF and to the people and Government of Malaysia for the warm hospitality extended to him and his delegation.

According to him, 2015 marks the final year of the region's endeavour to realize the ASEAN Economic Community, which requires the region to review our achievements altogether; to continue addressing the remaining challenges and set common vision beyond 2015. His Excellency congratulated ASLI for setting the necessary works to transform this leadership forum into an important ASEAN annual platform, bringing together leaders from ASEAN, CEOs of corporations, academia and civil society to share views on challenges and opportunities for the realization of AEC by 2015 and the Post-2015 Vision.

Through the efforts made to implement the action plans in accordance with the three pillars of regional community establishment, His Excellency remarked that not only has ASEAN maintained as a region of peace, stability and high growth, but it has also transformed into a closely integrated economic and political region, an influential player in Asia as well as an indispensable strategic partner for countries and large institutions in the world.

ASEAN has become one of the world's most dynamic and fastest growing economic regions after years of sustained and impressive growth. During the period between 2007 and 2014, ASEAN economies grew faster than the global growth average, proving resilience to successive global crises.

The realization of ASEAN Economic Community at the end of 2015 will significantly contribute to regional development through the increase in commercial, investment and other economic activities, as well as further strengthening connectivity within ASEAN itself and between ASEAN and its dialogue partners. Besides, the development of trade blocs in the Asia Pacific region including Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, Trans-Pacific Partnership and other new initiatives, such as the establishment of the New Development Bank of BRICS, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the adoption of China's Belt and Road Initiative, will further increase the variety of financial resources for regional connectivity and development. These will further liberalize trade of goods and services as well as investment. As such, we expect that ASEAN, as one community, will become a pivotal platform with political and socio-economic influence for the wider Asian region and the world in the context of emerging economic architecture.

His Excellency remarked that to achieve the ultimate goal of "One Community, One Vision, One Identity", ASEAN must strengthen its commitment to resolve challenges in relation to narrowing the development gap among member states and to promote connectivity in all aspects, including physical, institutional and people-to-people connectivity. Aside from this, ASEAN must also give high priority to maintaining peace, security, political stability, and macroeconomic stability and sustainability as well as to promote competitiveness to ensure resilient, inclusive and high economic growth for ASEAN Community beyond 2015.

In this context, His Excellency underscored additional priorities to which ASEAN should continue under the framework of the Post-2015 Vision with the aspiration to "achieve more comprehensive ASEAN integration and promote sustainable and equitable economic growth" as follows:

Firstly is to continue to strengthen trade facilitation to promote development and effectively expand production chain necessary for creating a strong market and production base as well as strengthening regional competitiveness especially through the elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers.

Secondly is to expedite the implementation of liberalization and facilitation of cross-border capital flows in line with ASEAN Comprehensive Investment Agreement in order to ensure favourable investment climate in the region, specifically services liberalization to ensure robust development of services in the region.

Thirdly is to accelerate connectivity, transport facilitation and logistics to integrate ASEAN's economy and production chain more closely into the global market.

Fourthly is to promote the development of Small and Medium Enterprises, and entrepreneurship and innovation so as to enhance more job opportunities and entrepreneurial talents which are dynamic driving force for promoting economic growth and equity throughout the region.

Fifthly is to strengthen financial market integration that provides ASEAN with many benefits, such as increasing capital flow between markets.

Sixthly, is to strengthen capacity in financial risk management and improving corporate oversight, and to strengthen environmental protection and natural resource management and reduction of disaster impacts.

Seventh is to expedite the reduction of domestic income inequality by ensuring inclusiveness through strengthening of education, knowledge and technology transfer among all member countries together with the promotion of gender equality that is also one of the important catalysts for development.

In conclusion, His Excellency remarked that Cambodia places high priority to its economic integration into ASEAN Community, considering it to be vitally important for sustaining its economic development. Therefore, Cambodia has been well-prepared for the 2015 ASEAN Economic Community, thanks to the openness of the economy and strong commitment of the government and private sector in meeting the AEC's requirements. Based on the ASEAN Scorecard that measures implementation progress of AEC's requirements, Cambodia ranks 3rd. In 2015 and beyond, Cambodia will continue working closely with ASEAN members and all relevant stakeholders in order to address remaining challenges with the objective to accomplish full integration of our regional community.

As a part of these efforts, in the pursuit of transforming Cambodia into an upper middle income country by 2030, the Royal Government of Cambodia has adopted an Industrial Development Policy 2015 – 2025 aimed at promoting diversification of an industrial base through attracting higher value-added and more competitive investments. The government will also continue to diversify export markets by promoting transport connectivity and logistic systems, improving regulatory framework and trade facilitation, and enhancing capacity building and skills, which will require additional major investments.

Special Address by His Excellency U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar at the 12th ASEAN Leadership Forum

His Excellency expressed his delight to speak at the opening ceremony of the 12th ASEAN Leadership Forum held in conjunction with the 26th ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur. He went on to remark that 2015 is a critical year in ASEAN Community Building. He opined that 2015 will remain a milestone in realizing the ultimate goal to build a unified ASEAN with One Vision, One Identity and One Community.

Furthermore, the significance of this year lies in the finalization of the post-2015 Agenda and Vision to further enhance the ASEAN integration. Against this backdrop, His Excellency saw the importance of the ASEAN Leadership Forum. Twelve years have passed since the formation of this annual ASEAN Leadership Forum. He went on to say that ALF has earned the reputation as a leading regional programme which brings together the Leaders of ASEAN and the Business Leaders, civil societies, academia and think tanks of the ASEAN region. While recognizing that this forum will concentrate on ASEAN's post-2015 agenda and vision, he opined that the objective of the forum is timely, appropriate and helpful to the present and future obligations of the ASEAN Community.

His Excellency envisioned that the ALF discussion will compliment the work of ASEAN inter-governments at the regional and national levels. This will serve to contribute to the achievement of the goals of the ASEAN's three main pillars. It is important to ensure the establishment of an enabling environment that on the harmony, happiness and the security of the ASEAN people.

It must be based upon ASEAN shared principles, values and norms. His Excellency went on to say it is ASEAN citizen's responsibility to establish an inclusive and participatory community with reputable livelihood. The people-oriented and people-centred ASEAN that the region is aspiring to become, should be built upon an enhanced engagement and networking among individuals, businesses and organizations in the ASEAN region. At the same time, the role of the private sector, civil societies, academia and the media is also very important. He stressed that these stakeholders will add value to the governments' efforts in ensuring people is instilled with ASEAN sense of belonging.

In order to meet the aspirations for a people-centered ASEAN, it is important to fully realize the ASEAN Connectivity in all three aspects of physical connectivity, institutional connectivity and people-to-people connectivity. His Excellency opined that this forum will generate useful inputs to expedite the connectivity projects. Such are the trends that are anticipated for the ASEAN Community that will emerge at the end of 2015. The achievement of these aspirations will depend largely on ASEAN's cooperation with its dialogue partners and other regional partners. It is imperative to uphold ASEAN's centrality in the evolving regional architecture.

His Excellency concluded by underscoring the on-going process of ASEAN integration. This process is the basis to address the overarching elements in the ASEAN Community and also to deal with the challenges of the future.

Special Address by H.E. C.Y Leung, Chief Executive, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

His Excellency remarked that it's a great pleasure to be here in Kuala Lumpur. One of Asia's most dynamic capital cities, Kuala Lumpur is also among the world's fast emerging global cities. No less important, it's one of his favourite cities for its hospitality.

He went on to say that the theme of this 12th Leadership Forum, "Forward ASEAN: One Community, One Vision, One People", smartly reflects the growing collaboration that has come to mark 21st century Asia. He opined that cooperation in the business and trade, political tie and in cultural development is the only way forward. The rock solid certainty in the value, and rewards of cooperation, is the driving force behind the ASEAN Hong Kong Free Trade Agreement, which has been under negotiation since last July.

His Excellency mentioned that the third round of negotiations concluded last month in Hong Kong. All is progressing smoothly, and he looks forward to a successful conclusion in the coming year. His Excellency explained that Hong Kong and ASEAN have long enjoyed strong relations. That is much in evidence in our trade ties. ASEAN is Hong Kong's second largest trading partner in goods and our fourth largest in services. Last year, the total value of merchandise trade between Hong Kong and ASEAN exceeded US\$106 billion up 10 per cent over the previous year.

Given the continuing growth in trade, and Hong Kong's expanding bilateral relations in general, there is a plan to open a new Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in the region. Once the FTA is up and running, His Excellency is confident that it will boost our "super connector" role between Mainland China and ASEAN.

Hong Kong is, after all, a trade and logistics hub, the world's Chinese financial centre and China's international financial centre. He went on to say that "When you are in Hong Kong, you are in China a market with tremendous potential". And, he thanked the "One Country, Two Systems" arrangement, that benefits the international business partners.

He cited an example, CEPA that refers to the Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement with Mainland of China. In effect since 2004, CEPA is Hong Kong's free trade agreement with the Mainland. Since 2006, all Hong Kong products that meet CEPA origin rules can gain tariff free access to the Mainland market. And, the vast services market of the Mainland has been gradually opening to Hong Kong services suppliers now for more than a decade. CEPA is nationality neutral. This means that ASEAN investors can realise the same advantages that Hong Kong companies enjoy. They only need to establish manufacturing operations in Hong Kong or partner with a Hong Kong company to take advantage of all that CEPA can offer ASEAN products and services.

And there's more good free trade news on the way. By year's end, Hong Kong is expected to enjoy basic liberalisation of trade in services with the Mainland. The first big step in that development was set in motion just last month, when basic liberalisation of trade in services between Hong Kong and the neighbouring, very prosperous Guangdong Province was achieved.

Guangdong has long been a major recipient of Hong Kong investment. Indeed, in 2013, it accounted for about one third of our outward direct investment in the Mainland. And the new agreement gives Hong Kong investors first mover advantage in the opening up of Guangdong's services sectors. The Guangdong Free Trade Zone, formally established earlier this week, is sure to supercharge Hong Kong business and investment in Guangdong, and that, His Excellency was hasten to add, will include Hong Kong based ASEAN companies.

In particular, it will benefit Hong Kong high value added services. In fact, Hong Kong has been in the offshore Renminbi business since 2004. His Excellency noted that today Hong Kong is the world's largest offshore Renminbi centre. Indeed, the Renminbi may well be the best illustration of Hong Kong's "super connector" role between the Mainland and the rest of the world. Through cross border trade, direct investment and portfolio investment, Hong

Kong links offshore and onshore Renminbi markets, promoting the healthy circulation, and development, of Renminbi funds.

The development to date has certainly been promising. Last year, Renminbi trade settlement handled by banks in Hong Kong reached RMB 6.3 trillion, up 63 per cent per year. Hong Kong is also the world's largest offshore pool of Renminbi liquidity. At the end of February, Renminbi customer deposits and outstanding certificates of deposit issued totalled RMB 1.1 trillion.

Our Renminbi financing activities are also buoyant, the amount of outstanding Renminbi loans increasing from 116 billion at the end of 2013 to RMB 188 billion at the end of 2014, an increase of 62 per cent in a year. From 2007 to February of this year, nearly 500 Renminbi bond issuances have taken place in Hong Kong, with an outstanding amount exceeding RMB 370 billion. Hong Kong is also the world's largest offshore Renminbi investment product market. Renminbi investment funds, insurance, currency futures, real estate investment trusts, shares, derivative products and more are available through Hong Kong.

It's all supported by advanced infrastructure. The average daily turnover on Hong Kong's RMB Real Time Gross Settlement system reached RMB 960 billion at the end of February. Today, more than 220 banks participate in the Renminbi clearing platform in Hong Kong. They form a global Renminbi payment network covering some 40 countries and regions.

Perhaps the most telling piece of statistic is this: Hong Kong now handles about 70 per cent of the world's Renminbi payments that according to the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication. And we're only getting started. Hong Kong is strengthening its market infrastructure and financial offerings to enhance their market friendliness. And will continue to work with the Mainland to create Renminbi opportunities that reward us all, including ASEAN companies handling their Renminbi transactions in Hong Kong.

His Excellency mentioned that Hong Kong is strategically placed as China's international financial centre. The most recent example of this is the Shanghai Hong Kong Stock Connect. Launched last November, the programme underscores Hong Kong's "super connector" role between the Mainland and the rest of the world. Through Stock Connect, investors from Hong Kong, and overseas, including ASEAN, of course, can trade in more than 500 Shanghai listed shares through the Hong Kong Stock Exchange, directly, for the first time. And Mainland investors can use onshore Renminbi funds to invest in shares listed on Hong Kong Stock Exchange. This unique connectivity with the Mainland stock market will bring huge opportunities to Hong Kong. In fact, Stock Connect is already benefitting financial intermediaries in Hong Kong. They're the ones offering investment management and market research, as well as custodian and brokerage services, to Hong Kong and international investors turning to the Mainland stock market.

Less than three weeks ago, both Shanghai bound and Hong Kong bound turnovers broke single day records, with the highest combined daily turnover reaching approximately US\$5 billion, according to His Excellency. Shanghai Hong Kong Stock Connect is only the beginning. Hong Kong now is now working on the Shenzhen Hong Kong Stock Connect- the next step forward in the harmonising of the Hong Kong and Mainland financial systems. His Excellency attributed this success to China's Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road initiatives. Here, too, Hong Kong's "super connector" role can help bring China and the world together.

"One Belt, One Road," as it's called, will promote closer cooperation with countries across Asia, Europe and Africa. Connectivity is the magic word. And His Excellency noted that Hong Kong will see this unprecedented partnership coming together in a great many areas,

from the strengthening of infrastructural facilities to the enabling of unimpeded trade and investment, the deepening of financial integration and the building of people to people bonds among countries across the three continents. Hong Kong is strategically located at the centre of Asia, perfectly positioned between the Mainland and overseas markets. The world's eighth largest trading economy, Hong Kong is a key regional trade and logistics centre.

The "One Belt, One Road" initiatives will only extend its outreach. Hong Kong's advantages will bring the nation closer to ASEAN, the Middle East, Africa, Russia, Kazakhstan and other Central Asia countries. Those advantages include the powerful competitive edge in services, from trade, logistics and finance to legal, accounting and other professional services, together with infrastructural project management, environmental and risk assessment, and transport and tourism services.

The "Belt Road" initiatives will create immense demand for these and other high level services. Hong Kong is the world's freest port for trade and investment. Capital, information, trade and people: they all flow freely in and out of Hong Kong. The US based Heritage Foundation has ranked Hong Kong number one in its Index of Economic Freedom every year since 1994. Hong Kong is also the easiest place in the world to do business. His Excellency remarked that after all, Hong Kong is blessed with a low and simple tax system and world class logistics and communications infrastructure, all built on the rule of law, on judicial independence and on intellectual property protection regime. His Excellency went on to add that ASEAN businesses can compete with other companies, local and overseas, on an equal footing in Hong Kong.

As the "Belt Road" developments increase the flow of international investment, as well as investment in and out of China, Hong Kong is supremely placed to serve as the "super connector". The Silk Road Fund and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) are integral to the "Belt Road" strategy. With a final funding target of US\$40 billion, the Silk Road Fund will provide investment and financing support for infrastructure construction, industrial cooperation and other connectivity projects among countries along the "One Belt, One Road." With 57 founding members, the AIIB will help address the region's infrastructure financing funding gap, estimated to be about US\$780 billion a year between 2010 and 2020.

Hong Kong's financing and asset management professionals can support the AIIB in such areas as project financing, investment, financial management and foreign exchange management. Hong Kong can help it realise the huge infrastructural investment needed to connect the Belt Road's ambitious blueprint. In the long run, Hong Kong will benefit from the increasing intra-regional trade along the "Belt Road."

According to His Excellency, China is, of course, a major ASEAN trading partner. And it's expected that multilateral trade will soar as the Belt Road's infrastructural and economic prospects become reality. Hong Kong is already helping Mainland enterprises "go global" with a wide range of professional services in the financial and legal areas. In the coming "Belt Road" era, that support will grow immeasurably. It will create unprecedented opportunities for Hong Kong's financial services industry and professionals and our ASEAN partners. In conclusion, His Excellency is confident that economic and trade ties between ASEAN and Hong Kong will only continue to grow, indeed, to soar.

Special Address by H.E. Gregory L. Domingo, Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry, Philippines (representing the President of Philippines)

His Excellency Domingo expressed his delight to speak on behalf of President Aquino. It is indeed enriching to see how ASEAN has evolved and grown in strength since its inception, today standing as a solid pillar of stability and growth in the world; today, on the aspiration of

becoming one community. As ASEAN reflects on all that it has accomplished together, His Excellency reminded that we cannot be content; that there is still much more to do for the people of ASEAN.

The development of the region rests not only on the governments that lead it. As leaders, His Excellency went on to urge leaders to engage their own peoples in treading the same path, towards realizing the aspirations as one ASEAN community. That is why we are here today: to engage businessmen and key stakeholders in our shared quest to realize a more progressive, more inclusive, and more people-driven ASEAN.

According to His Excellency, the success that the Philippines have seen these past few years may have some lessons to impart. Against all odds, Philippines have improved its economic climate, and indeed, the government of the Philippines attributes its success to each and every Filipino. Then, as today, the principle is simple: Good governance means good economics, and both cannot take place without investing in the nation's most valuable resource: its people. Implementing reform to institutionalize transparency and accountability in government is the key to showing our people that they could once again trust their key institutions: trust therefore became the foundation of cooperation, leading to a more productive working relationship between the people and government.

Aside from this, Philippines also focused on implementing projects that equip its people with education and employment, provide access to proper health and social services, all so that they can lead dignified lives. In the end, it is important to ensure inclusive growth: growth in which every last Filipino feels the economic benefits of the country's development. This translates to a skilful and productive workforce, which will easily form an active consumer market, fostering the ground for more investments and business. Inclusiveness is more than just about economic benefits being felt by all; inclusiveness is also and more importantly about each and every one contributing to further progress.

In the Philippines, the quest for development is one that necessitates the participation and empowerment of the entire citizenry. It stands to reason, then, that as leaders, His Excellency mentioned that leaders should also listen to the voices of its people.

These kinds of forums will provide an opportunity for ASEAN citizens to do precisely this. By allowing civil society to engage in dialogues such as these, leaders are enabling them to become active participants in strengthening the ASEAN community. By creating more opportunities for collaboration and partnerships with its citizens, it promotes a balanced community, one that not only uplifts the peoples' welfare, but also empowers them as contributors in the growth as a region.

DAY TWO: 27TH APRIL 2015 (MONDAY)

27th Ballroom, Mandarin Oriental Hotel, Kuala Lumpur

Welcome Speech by Dato' Sri Jamaludin Ibrahim, President and Group CEO, Axiata Group Berhad

Dato' Sri Jamaludin Ibrahim welcomed all the participants of the Forum. He expressed his great pleasure and honour that Axiata can be the sponsor for the 6th year. He began by saying that Malaysia is chairing this year's the annual ASEAN Summit. Hence, this makes the occasion even more special. In regards to the theme of the event, Dato' Sri Jamaludin believes that ASEAN people should not only "move forward" but also "fast forward". He, then talked about the Broadband Revolution, explaining to participants it does not just refer to the telecom industry. He went on to emphasise that mobile broadband and digital innovation should be the priorities in ASEAN. It, therefore, is necessary to enhance public-private partnership as well as introduce aggressive policies for the telecommunications sector.

Dato' Sri Jamaludin believed that the 10 ASEAN countries form a strategic economical regional organisation. However, more emphasis is required to tap on the positive factors such as young population and innovative technologies to become a truly successful bloc. He then elaborated on the subjects of broadband and the digital economy.

Dato' Sri Jamaludin Ibrahim considered broadband to be a fundamental factor that enhances competitiveness at the global level. It would bring opportunities for enterprises and population to engage in the digital economy. According to a study conducted by GSM, Deloitte, and Cisco, broadband penetration increases GDP growth, which makes it not only a telecom issue but a national issue. In 2014, 93 billion dollars contributed to GDP in 9 countries, including the creation of jobs. ASEAN could contribute to the further development of the industry through the introduction of tax incentives. National policies are also needed to encourage such developments.

Dato' Sri Jamaludin Ibrahim moved on the topic of digital economy, first by saying that connectively a target should be set for digital services. One such example is digital payment. As mobile banking is rapidly expanding financial institutions which can lead to enormous social effects for the people whom do not yet have bank accounts. In some countries, mobile operators and banks work together to provide mobile payment solutions, where as in Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Bangladesh where mobile banking has reduced the time of payments.

He concluded his speech by pointing out the challenges to make mobile payments a reality. There is a great need for competition, development of cash distribution, and most of all, regulation. He added that there is a need for collaboration between the public and private sectors to establish an equal system. This needs to be revisited aggressively and proactively, and that ASEAN together can change the world.

SESSION 1:

Realising the ASEAN Economic Community – The Game Changer

The AEC comes into being on December 2015. What has ASEAN achieved so far in its journey towards the AEC? This session will take stock of what has been achieved and what gaps to close to realise the AEC. The AEC will be a game changer for ASEAN. How can the business community support the AEC? What will the ASEAN private sector gain from the AEC?

Moderator:

Datuk Abdul Farid Alias, Group President & CEO, Malayan Banking Berhad

Speakers:

Tan Sri Rafidah Aziz, Chairman, AirAsia Berhad & former Minister of International Trade & Industry, Malaysia

Tan Sri Rafidah started by claiming that we first need to ensure that ASEAN remains in the game, before thinking of it as a game changer. AEC is only one of the components of ASEAN original plan. It is a pillar that has evolved very quickly compared to the other pillars. She says ASEAN can hardly move forward if we only concern about the economic community. Much has already been done in terms of opening the market. Thus, the economic sphere is doing well, as long as the private sector is driving it. She also questioned issues regarding political and social security as there are many pressing issues such as terrorism, something of which ASEAN needs give attention. Furthermore, she mentioned the necessity to focus on the political and social pillars, as investors need to know that Malaysia (and the ASEAN region) is safe for business.

Clearly defining what ASEAN represents is another priority. Hence, she encouraged leaders and ministers on the need to present and promote ASEAN at the global level. Tan Sri Rafidah also pointed out that people do not have strong awareness about ASEAN as much as people in Europe know about the EU. She ended her session by expressing her disappointment with the lack of implementation within ASEAN, calling for more action to be taken.

Mr. Ian Buchanan, Senior Executive Advisor, PwC Strategy & (ANZSEA) Pty Ltd (formerly Booz & Co), Sydney / Chairman, Australia National Committee for Pacific Economic Cooperation (Aust PECC)

Mr. Buchanan started by pointing out what has worked and what has to be done in ASEAN. Regarding the former, he mentioned that peace, stability as well as economic growth has been successful, but pointed out that it is not due to the ASEAN itself and cites institutional reform as a key issue. In particular, he pointed out that although AEC is a game changer, there are several countries within ASEAN which are cautious of doing business. According to Mr. Buchanan, in many countries the political systems are still in transition from an autocracy state of elites to democracies that is characterised by institutional capacity and the rule of law. In this sense, he stressed on the importance of domestic performance, as well as institutional capacity building to improve the economic performance of member countries in ASEAN.

Mr. Pushpanathan Sundram, Former ASEAN Deputy Secretary General / Chairman, Asean China Business Association

Mr Sundram noted that economic integration in South East Asia has not been an easy task. According to him, the diversity in ASEAN is a considerable factor. In his view, diversity can be strength rather than a weakness. He made his point by mentioning a couple of diverse societies within national economies (e.g. natural resources, technologies). He pointed out the fact that each country has its own specific economic strengths, leading people to think differently from each other. The result is a wider range of sources of innovation.

Mr. Sundram then moved on to the topic of the AEC. In this regard, he mentioned that 90% of it has been completed, according to numbers provided by the scorecard. He however, added that the latter does not look at implementation when assessing the percentage of AEC's completion. 2015 is only a milestone in the process of building AEC, a process that needs time. Also, being that the AEC is only one of the pillars of ASEAN, there is a necessity to build on the other two as well, stressing on the importance of social cohesion, in order to fully achieve the economic integration.

He mentioned the importance of having further liberalisation in services, as it represents a very important sector in ASEAN. He shared that FDI in ASEAN has overtook the ones going to China, with the consequence of bringing big opportunities, big consumers, and a growing market within the region. The speaker made another point concerning ASEAN's mutual recognition of several professions (e.g. architects), which he believes to be fundamental but too often endangered by domestic legislations. Mr Sundram concluded his points by touching the subject of implementation, where he explained that the absence of the rule of law in ASEAN is leading to the impossibility to act in terms of pushing implementation, and, in this sense, he stressed on the necessity to establish legal connectivity.

Mr. Rajiv Biswas, Senior Director & Asia Pacific Chief Economist, IHS Global Insight, Singapore

Mr. Biswas began by referring to ASEAN as one of the most exciting regions globally in terms of economic growth and potential. Then, he added that China's new development finance initiatives could be very important for ASEAN infrastructures. He went on to speak about the Silk Road Fund as well as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.

According to Mr Biswas, the AEC is a game changer because liberalisation of trade and services lead to a significant degree of development in the region. As for Malaysia, he claimed that the country is going to become a high-income economy by 2020, of which its GDP is expected to double, and the fiscal deficit is expected to narrow according to statistics from his organisation. He also added the AEC liberalisations will boost Malaysia service exports. He also pointed out that Malaysia's financial services industry will be boosted by the recent adoption of the ASEAN Banking Integration Framework. Moreover, the rapid growth of ASEAN countries will increase exports of Malaysian tourism and education services.

Dr. Robert Yap, Executive Chairman, YCH Group and Chairman, ASEAN BAC Singapore

Dr Yap pointed out that many businesses, especially SMEs are not aware of the developments of the AEC and related opportunities. He then explained that the AEC represents both as a challenge as well as an opportunity. In this regard, he expressed his optimism about the economic integration, which will change the whole ASEAN environment and the way the region will compete in the world. Besides, he believes that AEC will likely

bring about opportunities, especially for the manufacturing industry. The speaker also mentioned ASEAN 'diversity', which he believed to be a great advantage, a big value, for the competitiveness of the region. Dr Yap concluded by saying that ASEAN is ready for a single market, and stressed the importance of connectivity in order to bring products to the consumers.

SESSION 2:

Towards a People Centred ASEAN – What More Needs To Be Done

There is a need to make ASEAN more relevant to the ordinary people of ASEAN to make them feel a sense of belonging to ASEAN? How to better create ASEAN consciousness? How to enhance people connectivity in ASEAN? What more can ASEAN do to promote and protect human rights, women's and children's rights and migrant workers? What can the media do to enhance ASEAN consciousness? What is the role of civil society? How to reduce inequalities?

Moderator:

Tan Sri Mohamed Jawhar Hassan, Chairman, New Straits Times Press (M) Berhad / former Chairman, Institute of Strategic & International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia

Commencing the session, Tan Sri Mohamed Jawhar was hopeful that panellist can shed some light on how significant steps can be taken to make ASEAN to more people-centred, followings the theme of "A People-Centred ASEAN".

Speakers:

Prof. Dr. Thitinan Pongsudhirak, Director, Institute of Security and International Studies, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand

Professor Thitinan described ASEAN as the most successful but unnatural regional organisation in world history. ASEAN is working in progress, wanting to see ASEAN with the perspective that it is a "glass-half full", not "half-empty". While initiatives like the AEC is gaining more attention, focus should be given to the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community or ASCC, which is crucial in nurturing an ASEAN community. Prof Thitinan described ASEAN as "unnatural" because it is a very diverse region with various ethnicities, religions, languages, regimes, different kinds of people, and different histories. Despite coming together for the last 48 years, it does not yet feel like a community.

The challenge is how to create a community without a supranational identity. Part of the problem is that ASEAN has a non-interference policy, where one country does not meddle in the affairs of another member country. Under such a scenario, it is very difficult to have a community. Professor Thitinan revealed that civil society is boycotting the interface with governments of certain countries that are not allowing civil society to select their own representatives. These countries instead appointed their own representatives, which is unacceptable.

Professor Thitinan opined that ASEAN is not people-centre but still remain as an elitist state-centric organisation, which is due to the regime types that it has. He stated that it not possible to have a people-centred ASEAN with repressive regimes. To be more people-centred, Professor Thitinan remarked that there is a need for governments to be more open minded and promote an open society which are bottom-up as opposed to

regimes/dictatorships which are top-down otherwise the theme of a people-centred ASEAN will be an empty and shallow rhetoric where the people's concerns are not met.

Professor Thitinan concluded that only when ASEAN is genuinely people centred can ASEAN be more integrated. To facilitate this process more civil societies are needed. Governments also need to respect civil society meetings and allow interfaces to take place.

Ms Elaine Tan, Executive Director, ASEAN Foundation

Ms Tan began by citing on Professor Thitinan's point on making ASEAN people-centred. She shared of an upcoming university credit transfer system where students can transfer or undertake units at another university in an ASEAN-member country as part of the course. This is a good way to establish people to people connectivity and a means to make ASEAN more people-centred and creating greater ASEAN awareness. This echoes sentiments from a previous session, the Young Leaders roundtable discussion, where participants talked about developing a sense of ASEAN consciousness through people to people connectivity and interaction.

To accomplish this, the ASEAN Foundation is receiving support from the European Union on how to implement this initiative and shared that most ASEAN universities will have this programme. In the private sector, the ASEAN Foundation is working with AirAsia to promote a cultural exchange programme.

Ms Tan also shared about the ASEAN Foundation's initiatives in introducing an ASEAN Puppet Exchange Programme. This programme is conducted between universities and researchers which involved exchanges between Thailand-Laos, Cambodia-Malaysia, and Brunei-Philippines.

She pointed out that ASEAN does engage with civil societies via NGO forums. This is a viable method to establish relationship. This mechanism allows civil societies to submit their recommendations more effectively and be taken seriously (by the governments of ASEAN-member countries). Ms Tan also expressed that ASEAN Foundation's aspiration is to facilitate interactions between stakeholders and though she was only recently appointed as Executive Director a year ago, she is passionate in wanting to reach out and regularly engage ASEAN as well as to support the community building process.

Ms Penny Low, Member of Parliament, Singapore and Founder and President, Social Innovation Park Ltd, Singapore

Ms Low began by questioning the definition of a people-centred ASEAN, if it should simply be about bringing people together from the different parts of ASEAN to provide a common platform for people to talk and know each other, or if it is a political/institutional platform. She pointed out that a people-centred ASEAN means different things to different people and that there are many ways to foster this objective which requires a genuine "many-hands approach".

Ms Low stressed that the pre-requisite to establish an ASEAN community is the need to build trust, as without trust there can be no relationships nor an integrated ASEAN, let alone a people-centeredness. She shared about a research conducted by Edelman. This research developed the Trust Barometer and findings show that trust levels for 2014-2015 across all sectors have decreased. Of four sectors, it was the NGO sector which has the most confidence and trust; followed by the business sector, and next, the media. The

governments sector scored the lowest amount of confidence and trust, a fact which is of little surprise.

Ms Low agreed with previous speakers that there is a need for bottom up initiatives as opposed to top-down approach. She went on to say that leaders at the top must provide an institutional framework which enables implementation. She noted that the grassroots must also contribute in fostering a sense of mutual understanding, knowing each other, having less fear of the unknown and coming together to share common experiences and history. This will allow genuine development of a more inclusive ASEAN as a people-centred ASEAN. It is an ASEAN that empowers its people. Ms Low views that such developments are perceived dangerously in the eyes of many governments, but also believes that there is no other way out of this scenario.

The Pasir Ris MP pointed out that for People-centred ASEAN to be realised, all four sectors need to work together. To do this, a common platform is required to foster relations between the four sectors, not only within their own countries but across ASEAN as people need to be given opportunities within ASEAN itself.

To move forward towards a people-centred ASEAN, Ms Low implied that it depends very much on how information is trusted. Drawing upon the Adelman's findings, a research conducted in 2013-2014, the level of trust for newspapers have declined from 20% to 18%, while online search has increased from 26% to 37%, and finally television from 28% to 27% which is still respectably high. Ms Low highlighted that online search is the preferred source of information as ASEAN has a huge population of youths while are accustomed to free access of information. She is stressed the need to use contemporary methods to reach this group of people.

Datuk Dr. Denison Jayasooria, Secretary General, Association for Promotion of Human Rights (PROHAM)

Datuk Dr. Denison began his presentation by focusing on human rights issues. He stated that there is a need to review the model of development which has been adopted by a majority of ASEAN countries.

The first issue is the model of development adopted by a majority of ASEAN countries. In terms of achievement in the area of public policy, most ASEAN nations spoke about being people-centred and inclusive development.

In reality, there is a drastic contrast in the models of development and to what extent people is part of the democratic process, in decision making, and determining the future of their own states as well as the future of ASEAN as a whole. He quoted Amartya Sen, in his writings in Development as Freedom.

Datuk Dr. Denison pointed out that ASEAN seemed to be more in the control of the political elites and big businesses as opposed to the people. The focus for the future should not be solely on economic freedom but development as freedom, nor just on economic, social and cultural rights but also in the civil and political rights dimension.

Datuk Dr. Denison remarked that the whole global movement since Rio+20 has been struggling in the development agenda, referring to post-MDG and post 2015 development agenda. He noted the significance of the participatory process in which the UN and the member states were involved. From the Rio gatherings in Brazil and People's Assembly, many documents have emerged. This includes the discussion of development growth.

Datuk Dr Denison highlighted the UN Secretary-General's report entitled the *Synthesis Report of the Secretary-General on the Post-2015 Agenda* which rightfully identifies *The Road to Dignity by 2030: Ending Poverty, Transforming All Lives and Protecting the Planet*. This is a more holistic and inclusive agenda. – Where the participatory process which is open and transparent benchmarking with the UN is a good platform for ASEAN as well.

Datuk Dr Jayasooria spoke about human rights issue. He first commended ASEAN on the establishment of the ASEAN Inter-Governmental Human Rights Commission as well as the Commission on Rights of Women and Children. He went on to share about the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration. However, critics highlighted that the benchmarks used in the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration as inconsistent with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. There is a conceptual conflict in public policy and legislation where many ASEAN nation states have rectified UN Human Rights Conventions which are far more broad-based than the one signed from an ASEAN perspective.

Datuk Dr Denison also pointed out that the mandate for the ASEAN Inter-Governmental Human Rights Commission is only for promotion, but not protection. Should there be a cross-border complaint or unhappiness concerning migrant workers, human trafficking, religious freedom, indigenous people losing their lands, and other numerous violations, there are no mechanisms for investigation across ASEAN. Giving another example, if a business from one country commits violation of human rights in another country, mechanisms and mandates should in place for the national human rights commissions to carry out investigation and mediation. Datuk Dr Jayasooria shared that some have even proposed for an ASEAN human rights court. There is also the issue of policy, which at present prevents allow civil societies to be more critical of public policy at an ideological and substantive level. Therefore, there is a need to allow ASEAN to provide an enabling environment to implement human rights.

Datuk Dr Denison recommended that ASEAN should instil similar mechanisms which are set by the UN for civil society participation and engagement through a formal, transparent and open process. Some civil societies have access to New York and Geneva, but not to their own governments or the region. He urged for civil societies to be made legitimate partners in the participatory framework. There is a need to mainstream civil societies in the formal institutional mechanisms that go beyond political rhetoric and slogan.

Mr. Benjamin Quinones, Founder & President, Coalition for Social Responsibility of SME, Philippines

Mr Quinones spoke about community-based enterprises. Community based enterprise it is a strategic component of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). He said many are unaware of how significant micro and small enterprises. He went on to explain that these small companies have the potential to merge and cluster, developing their own supply-chains, providing a means where community-based enterprises can prosper.

Mr Quinones cited the example of the Community Supported Agriculture. It is established by a partnership between organised groups of consumers and farmers which has an agreement to buy everything that the farmers produced. Often these farmers are family-based and grow organic produce. Mr Quinones emphasised the importance of community supported agriculture in realising a people-centred ASEAN Economic Community. According to experts, there is growing urbanisation emerging from the economic growth in ASEAN-member countries. Commercialisation is transforming agricultural lands for commercial purposes are a consequence of AEC. Mr Quinones hence urged the need to create green space because it contributes to high quality of urban life, not merely for the sake of saving green space but also ensuring food security within the country and the ASEAN sub-region.

The second example cited by Mr Quinones is the partnership between organised producers or organised cooperatives/associations and buyers from developed countries. He mentioned that producers are often marginalised small farmers, while buyers are from other countries. He recommended that a minimum standard for practices to be applied in order to create a market niche for small, micro, medium enterprises.

Mr Quinones suggested that this diverse group of enterprises can cluster and be integrated into the ASEAN Economic Community. He mentioned that a market niche is needed and crucial for towards the success of small, micro-medium enterprises as even large companies have difficulty creating a niche for themselves.

Mr Quinones also spoke about micro-financing. He highlighted that when small, micro-medium enterprises merge, they can have bigger portfolios and this can contribute to long term sustainability. This enables them to form supply-chains, such as farmer cooperatives. He enquired if there is a possibility to integrate community-based enterprises into the Asian Solidarity Economic Community (ASEC). He shared that a similar question was posed during a workshop organised on 25th April 2015 by ASEC with participants from the ten ASEAN member countries, which responded positively to the question.

Considering that there is consensus to integrate community-based enterprises into the AEC, the next step is to identify what ASEAN can do together to strengthen these enterprises. Respondents from the workshop recommended to (1) monitor and evaluate community-based enterprises from each ASEAN country and provide historical data that can be forwarded in the annual ASEAN Summit.

Mr Quinones emphasised the importance of this measure is needed to prove that community-based enterprises can play a major role in the AEC. Other aspects were (2) training leaders and managers of community-based enterprises, (3) establish an ASEAN growth fund to strengthen the supply-chain of community-based enterprises, (4) offer formal education in collaboration with universities of community-based enterprise leaders and managers to instil the ASEAN community mindset. Part of the problem ASEAN faces is that members of its community are not able to see beyond national interests. Therefore, there is a need to nurture a new generation that considers ASEAN. (5) promote policies within ASEAN which support community-based enterprises, (6) enlist 1 million “social enterprising” consumers to patronise the products of community-based enterprises products (as a symbolic gesture), and (7) develop a regional framework for community-based enterprises development: vision, core values, business plan.

He also recommend that the proposed regional framework of the South-South and Triangular Cooperation programme which implies cooperation within developing countries with a Northern partners supporting the alliance. This strengthens horizontal cooperation between countries, (ii) supports innovation and productivity of local resources, (iii) enhances the adaptability/ replication of local good practice and (iv) helps to build community-based enterprise value chains that enhance economic diversity and resilience.

Q & A Session

Tan Sri Mohamed Jawhar Hassan thanked the members of the panel for their presentation. He posed a question as to why ASEAN is not quite people-centred, but is instead state-driven with what seems to be a partition between the state and the people.

He also asked what ASEAN has done in the past 48 years which has not been for the benefit of the people. He cited the ASEAN Charter which starts with “We the people of ASEAN...” and took a point from a comment made by Mr Pushpanathan in the previous panel who asked “where are the people?”

Tan Sri Mohamed Jawhar Hassan also wondered if the peoples are asking too much of ASEAN? There is also an issue with decision making as decisions are based on consensus rather than by a supranational authority; if one or two states disagree on an issue, the situations stalls. He also commented that civil society is unevenly developed across the ASEAN countries and that ASEAN is under resourced and under institutionalised. Finally, he commented that even individual nations have their own issues within its own borders and amongst their communities on how to proceed at a regional level.

Datuk Dr Denison remarked that there is progress in the recent years in terms of political interest and friendships amongst ASEAN states. However, there are certain things which are not addressed in the past 48 year, one of which is the mechanisms causing a deficit in the ASEAN mandate. This refers to ASEAN inability to address regional grievances such as the issue of migrations, refugees, etc. Still, there is much room for optimism and improvement as South East Asia is one of the fastest growing regions with great potential and resources (in terms of manpower/population).

Prof Dr Thitinan added that technology will play a major role to enable the people of ASEAN to be inter-connected and socialised with one another.

Tan Sri Ramon Navaratnam, Chairman, ASLI/CPSP, Group Advisor, Sunway Group, commented that the governments could have done more to promote a people-centred ASEAN and the people could have been consulted more. He questioned what the NGOs had done to ensure that their voice will be heard by the government. He said that in democracy, governments have to take account of the aspirations of the people, but if the people are silent or complacent then the government need not respond. He suggested that NGOs can form pressure groups to influence governments to listen to their aspirations. **Tan Sri Ramon Navaratnam** also suggested forming ASEAN associations in individual countries as a first step in encouraging participation from the grassroots.

Ms Aimi Ghani from the Central Bank of Malaysia posed a question to the panel on what would be a good non-inference policy when it comes to resolving human rights issues. Datuk Dr Denison Jayasooria responded by saying that the ASEAN Inter-Governmental Human Rights Commission is a commendable move in the right direction. All ASEAN heads of state endorsed this initiative, and it includes engagement with the civil society, but there is still a need for a formal mechanism to redress issues across borders. He revealed that member-states are quite protective of what happens within their own borders. This is further compounded by the fact that people whose rights are violated at national levels can only turn to international avenues for assistance, as there is a lack of support at national level. Lastly, he highlighted that the mechanisms are already available and ASEAN can benchmark itself against the UN processes (i.e. UN Human Rights High Commissioner and Human Rights Council), which is needed for ASEAN to strengthen the process.

Ms Penny Low suggested that getting people to work together towards a more productive and effective solution is a viable option. Such cooperation creates common goal and understanding for that benefit the people. She also emphasised a need to bring together all sectors (NGOs, media, business and government) and to hold regular meetings to deepen the sense of trust which is essential in relationship building. Otherwise it is difficult to have productive progress. She foresees that the younger tech savvy generation will play a significant role in forming civil societies which are more relevant in the region and it is important for the government sectors to work together with them.

In closing of the session, **Tan Sri Mohamed Jawhar Hassan advised that the people** in South East Asia must work not only at the regional ASEAN level, but also at the national level to contribute more progress in the national level. Efforts should also be undertaken to boost and push ASEAN, making it as a stronger institution to coerce national governments to work harder for its people.

SESSION 3:

Deepening ASEAN Integration and Strengthening Competiveness

The actualization of the AEC will enhance ASEAN competitiveness. How can business respond to greater regional integration? How can competitiveness be enhanced and what more can be done to enhance regional sectorial integration in key sectors like banking and finance/transport and logistics and supply chain? What will drive further regional integration? What sectorial integration is needed? How can ASEAN companies be more competitive?

Moderator:

Tan Sri Ramon Navaratnam, Chairman, ASLI/CPPS, Group Advisor, Sunway Group

Tan Sri Navaratnam noted that there is deep consensus that integration will lead to competition. This in turn will be good for all, he said. However, Tan Sri Navaratnam also noted that to get this right, political leaders are instrumental in setting the pace of development. With the existing framework, government should optimise this framework to enhance the regionalisation process.

Co-Moderator:

Mr. Alexander Wan, Senior Advisor, China Daily, Asia-Pacific

Mr. Wan noted that 2015 would be a memorable year. It is the 60th Anniversary of diplomatic between China and Indonesia and the 40th between China and Thailand. 2015 will also see the commencement of the AEC, as well as Malaysia as the Chair of ASEAN. This makes the timing for this ASEAN Leadership Forum so perfect, he said.

Speakers:

Mr. Andrew Geczy, Chief Executive Officer, International & Institutional Banking, Australia and New Zealand Banking Group (ANZ)

Mr. Geczy began by saying that “ASEAN is the next horizon”. He explained this through the release of a new ANZ report that calls for greater integration that is needed for the future growth of the region and the world.

He then asked the audience to remember three numbers – **5, 7** and **100**. Trade with the G4 nations will grow 3.7 to 3.8 in the next 5 years (USD3.5 trillion), while there will be between 6 and 8 percent growth (average of 7) during this time, there will also be about USD100 billion in trade into ASEAN during this period.

Mr. Geczy noted that there’s a large amount of work to be done to harmonise regulations in the region – especially between the ASEAN nations. He referenced the Ease of Doing

Business Survey conducted by the World Bank. It ranks Singapore as number 1 while Myanmar is 182 out of 189.

In recommending other areas for reform Mr. Geczy mentioned staffing in the ASEAN Secretariat. He said that there are currently about 400 people, compared to the European Union, which has a staff of over 30,000. Physical infrastructure links in ASEAN are also weak. He estimated that there is a USD8 trillion infrastructure deficit in Asia.

Going forward, Mr. Geczy said that political vision and leadership would be needed to realise these visions. If they are, ASEAN will become the manufacturing centre for the world as well as a large consumer base. But to achieve this, we need ASEAN leadership to have ASEAN integration.

Amb. Pradap Pibulsonggram, Thailand's Representative to the ASEAN High-Level Taskforce on Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC)

Amb. Pibulsonggram began by saying that focus should be on connectivity. This is the real game changer, he argued. In particular, ASEAN connectivity must be further pursued. In 2010, the leaders of ASEAN adopted the Master Plan on Connectivity recognising this as its 4th pillar.

Amb. Pibulsonggram also stated that the AEC and People-to-People mechanisms are some of the ways for the best connectivity to be achieved. ASEAN has 38 000 miles of road linkages, he noted. The first strategy should be to complete the ASEAN highway network. While Amb. Pibulsonggram acknowledged that this is largely done, he did say that there were some missing parts in Laos and certain land bridges to link mainland to maritime, as well as road signage.

Amb. Pibulsonggram noted that Malaysia is Thailand's number 1 border trading partner, accounting for about USD30 billion. He finished by saying that in the future businessmen should look at our region and get in the mindset of how to do business here, while striving to be more competitive.

Prof. Hidetoshi Nishimura, Executive Director, Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA)

Prof. Hidetoshi Nishimura began by saying that what lies beyond 2015 is a highly integrated, cohesive and globally linked community. This will deepen institutional connectivity and coordination and place more trust amongst business people and the citizens of ASEAN.

Prof. Nishimura noted that Malaysia is in the Top 20 in Ease of Doing Business, and competitiveness here is quite high. However, Malaysia needs to work hard to achieve results this year. This includes the AEC, which is not only a single market, but also a single production base.

Prof. Nishimura said that a future sophisticated development of an ASEAN character is also important. ASEAN must be resilient and sustainable, as well as globally competitive. The AEC will play the pivotal role in this, he said. Finally Prof. Nishimura argued that we need to invest in a better-governed cultural and social community in order to realise the ASEAN economic community.

Mr. Vivek Pathak, Director, Asia Pacific Department, International Financial Corporation (IFC)

Mr. Vivek Pathak began by stressing the need for more economic integration. He said that this is no longer a feel good factor, but rather a necessity. He argued that this is because we now live in a world where companies compete rather than countries. And, that many of these companies now have bigger revenues than national economies.

Mr. Pathak also argued that as China, Japan and India continue to grow; this will make it harder for ASEAN to compete. This is why it is so essential that ASEAN groups together as an innovation hub to make it more competitive to its surrounding nations.

Mr. Pathak noted there needs to be improved cross border harmonisation. This will be better for large companies to produce products in different countries and play to their strengths. He also said that combining stock markets and bond markets would be beneficial to facilitate cross-border flows and reduce costs. This will bring in more stock analysts to the region and help to facilitate cross border transactions and flows from bigger countries to smaller ones. In achieving this, political will is essential.

Mr. Justin Wood, Director, Southeast Asia, Economist Corporate Network, Singapore

Mr. Justin Wood began by saying that ASEAN needs to promote a more bottom up, grass roots private sector approach. That this is not happening is a common held belief that is actually untrue, he said – it is happening a lot. For example, Air Asia is driving cross-border integration. If we look at the numbers for ASEAN citizens visiting another ASEAN country last year, there were 45 million. This is up from 15 million 14 years ago, he said.

Mr. Wood also noted that as ASEAN comes together, this is changing the way the region thinks about itself. He noted that his organisation had asked 200 big companies if they starting to treat the region as a regional bloc. He noted that 85% of the big global players had a specific ASEAN business plan. He said that this is a much higher percentage than the local ASEAN companies, who do not organise around ASEAN as much.

In closing, Mr. Wood said that more and more companies are treating ASEAN as one area. Even though it would be hard to find 10 more different countries – socially, culturally, language and economy wise however, some things like consumer taste, the way companies organise and operate are become similar are happening in this region. This means that companies can take a more regional approach to their organisation and supply chains because more and more the region's consumer base is becoming more similar, he argued.

Prof. Edward K.Y. Chen, Distinguished Institute Fellow and Honorary Professor, the University of Hong Kong & President, Qianhai Institute for Innovative Research

Prof. Edward K.Y. Chen first asked the question of how ASEAN should manage relationship with other areas and countries and its FTAs. He noted that ASEAN was established in 1967 when there was lots of discussion about growth triangles. Though none of this really came to fruition there were lots of bilateral agreements. He noted that there have been about 300 FTAs discussed and concluded within Asia. He said that this is known as the spaghetti bowl, or noodle effect.

Prof. Chen noted that this trend is now being reversed. We can see a point where we are moving away from smaller regionalism and bilateralism to mega-regionalism, he argued. There are two main regions for this. One is the TPPA area, and the second is RCEP area.

Prof. Chen also said that now we are seeing the beginning of a New Maritime Silk road. This, he said, will be super regional agreement. He also argued that ASEAN is in a position where it can play a major role here. If we want to deepen ASEAN integration further, the question should be, how are we going to manage our external relationships? ASEAN should be working closer with these new super and mega-regional in order for better coordination.

Finally, Prof. Chen mentioned Open Regionalism. That is, extending benefits to non-members in a move towards world integration. He said that this will be the future, and that ASEAN have the political will but not be too political.

SESSION 4:

Developing the Post 2015 Vision – Enhancing Global Connectivity

ASEAN has actualised its 2015 vision of creating the ASEAN economic community. How can ASEAN further enhance centrality and connectivity both intra-Asean and with the global economy? How can ASEAN continue to improve the quality of life of its people? How can ASEAN strengthen regional connectivity?

Moderator:

Datuk Seri Mohamed Iqbal Rawther, Chairman, Malaysian Institute of Management (MIM) and Vice President, ASEAN Business Forum

Datuk Seri Mohamed Iqbal Rawther opened the session by reminding delegates of the spirit that brought ASEAN nations together back in 1967. According to the moderator, that spirit is now developing into a body and heart movement, physical and spiritual. Looking beyond 2015, it is important to reflect on that spirit that brought ASEAN together, and assess success and failure in order to move towards the future. He mentioned many important aspects to consider with regard to the future steps of ASEAN, identifying the education, and healthcare sectors as ones to give priority to. He also believes “balance” to be the key word when thinking about actions to be taken in these matters.

Speakers:

Dato’ Saifuddin Abdullah, Chief Executive Officer, Global Movement of Moderates Foundation / former Deputy Minister of Higher Education, Malaysia

Dato’ Saifuddin began by emphasising the importance of connectivity as some ASEAN leaders are disconnected with their own people. In his view, it is important to look at post 2015 in a more integrative way, one that requires more connectivity between leaders and people on the streets. He stressed on the fact that some politicians do not understand the reality of today’s world, adding that the civil society has made a call to reclaim ASEAN. In terms of global connectivity, he claimed that one of the two most popular youth programmes in ASEAN is sponsored by Japan. In terms of whether or not ASEAN is connected with the world, Dato’ Saifuddin mentioned that is both a yes and no. He explains that there are two major aspects where ASEAN can play an important role, the first one in the area of human rights and the other in the area of education. He said there are major questions in accordance to the Human Rights Charter and it is up to member states to do better. With the area of education, he suggested that the EU’s Bologna process could be a viable application in ASEAN.

Prof. Simon Tay, Chairman, Singapore Institute of International Affairs (SIIA)

Prof Simon Tay began by acknowledging that many are the things that the people of ASEAN want to do and much more can actually be done. He stressed on the necessity of having a progressive agenda in ASEAN, rather than an ideal one. In this sense, he added that he believes that the ASEAN agenda will drive itself.

Regarding the AEC, Professor Tay believes it will not be completed by the end of 2015 as there are many challenges concerning the economic integration. One of such challenges is represented by the large existing gap in the financial sector among member countries. Furthermore, he thinks that infrastructures need to be improved in order to achieve real connectivity. According to the speaker, ASEAN development will either drive itself or it will be driven from external influence such as influences from China's investments.

Professor Simon Tay also expressed the importance of establishing profitable partnerships with non-ASEAN countries. He also briefly mentioned climate change as one of the issues and challenges ASEAN will have to deal with in the years to come. In conclusion, he emphasised the role of the people and urged participants not underestimate it as he believes that governments are the ones really in charge of shaping the agenda and can play a key role in ASEAN's development process.

H.E. Ambassador Chung Hae Moon, Former Secretary General, ASEAN Korea Centre

Ambassador Chung listed several central elements which he believed should be considered as the basis to develop post 2015 ASEAN, one which is "people-centred". The elements he emphasised were; the protection of human rights, the necessity to embrace global standards in ASEAN way of life, acceptable migration policy, freedom of media, economic integration with the global community. Furthermore, he referred to the 2015-2025 Connectivity Blueprints, as well as the ASEM meeting in Milan, Italy, making the point of the importance of connectivity and cooperation between Europe and Asia. He concluded by sharing with delegates that the Chinese government will invest 50 billion in ASEAN infrastructures.

Mr. Andreas List, Senior Coordinator for ASEAN, EU Delegation

According to Mr Andreas List, ASEAN connectivity in the global context means that ASEAN needs to become a global player. Mr List claimed that the existing ASEAN is undoubtedly a successful story as it has provided political stability to the region. At the same time he pointed out that ASEAN is not an agenda setter, and therefore, does not have policy shaping power.

He then, gave three conditions for ASEAN to become a global player namely; leadership, legitimacy, and performance. He elaborated by saying that ASEAN needs visionary leaders rather than managers who fix problems. Besides, ASEAN needs to trust in its own institutions, beginning with the Secretariat, which should be given the mandate to monitor on implementation. Mr Andreas List also claimed that with more integration comes more complication, thus ASEAN should be prepared for more challenges to face. He also added that once the integration train has been set in motion it can hardly be stopped, and that it should not be stopped. He then shared some concrete proposals concerning ASEAN future step, such as suggestions to establish a peacekeeping force, election monitoring, and finally, on the economic side, free agreements with the EU.

Prof. Dato' Woo Wing Thye, President, Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia

Professor Dato' Woo began his segment by pointing out that much has been said about integration achievements in terms of free movement of goods and services. He says by talking and debating about a people-centred ASEAN, we are admitting that we have not yet achieved it. There are many challenges to face such as tensions in the South China Sea, global climate change, and the role of today's youth, among others. Regarding the youth, ASEAN needs to establish extensive exchange programmes for university students, modelling upon the Erasmus programme in Europe. Professor Dato' Woo explains that have all the conditions to create such a programme in ASEAN. He stressed that in today's education seeing is more important than hearing, and with this exchange programmes, ASEAN's youth would be able to understand the issues that affect the region. The key is "adapt and adopt" (from the EU).

Mr. Pou Sothirak, Executive Director, the Cambodian Institute for Cooperation and Peace

Mr Pou Sothirak began by saying that the post 2015 agenda must respond to the needs of the people in the region. In other words, ASEAN needs to deal with poverty and income gap. There should be more effort in the direction of supporting welfare, guaranteeing easy access to quality education, healthcare and other public goods. Also, he stressed on the importance of humanitarian assistance in natural disasters and diseases. He also mentioned the necessity of a technological spill over from the richest country to the less developed ones. He also added that regional development for each country should commit itself to universal values such as good governance, rule of law, and freedom of expression. He also believes that serious attention should be paid to environment issues and investment on human capital. According to Mr Pou Sothirak, ASEAN must ensure that regional initiatives such the AEC are people inclusive by establishing a truly borderless economic community. He concluded by pointing out the necessity to strengthen the ASEAN Secretariat and establishing sanction mechanisms in case of non-compliance.

Mr. Vu Quoc Huy, Head of Department, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, Institute of Regional Sustainable Development

Mr Vu Quoc Huy started his segment by claiming that people do care about ASEAN. Bringing forward some recommendations for ASEAN development, he stressed on the importance of having effective governments in member countries in order to achieve an effective people centred community. Secondly he spoke about issue with the development gap by pointing out that the progress made in this matter has been too slow. Mr Vu Quoc Huy suggested that actions need to be taken on this matter, suggesting that price mechanisms need to be established in order to help poorest countries to narrow the existing economic gap. Moreover, he added that it is important for a country to develop policies and take advantage of the ASEAN integration process. Finally, he moved on to the topic of global connectivity, stating that global sustainable growth is a factor that can enhance ASEAN connectivity with the rest of the world.

Presentation of Report from the ASEAN Young Leaders Roundtable

Ms Ng Yeen Seen, Chief Operating Officer of ASLI and Senior Director of CPPS moderated the roundtable discussion conducted on the 26th April 2015 and read out the findings and resolutions of the discussion to delegates of the ASEAN Leadership Forum:

Summary Key Takeaway for ASEAN Young Leaders Roundtable

Ms Ng remarked that the ASEAN young leaders gathered on the 26 of April for the 12th ASLI ASEAN Leadership Forum with the support of the British High Commission in KL. It was a productive discussion under the theme “Let’s Get Real: ASEAN Youth for Mutual Regional Development with an emphasis on the significant role of youth in establishing a collective identity formation of an ASEAN identity. The young leader’s roundtable noted the importance of the “4 Cs as the fundamental building block of ASEAN, namely, community building, connectivity, competitiveness and communication.

The discussion emphasised that youth from ASEAN countries are disenfranchised from the inter-governmental arena, albeit in different ways and to varying degrees. Undoubtedly, the challenges for youth that are central to ASEAN are numerous and varied. They include education, employment, health, gender and political participation issues. In most ASEAN countries, there is a lack of youth ownership of ASEAN identity among youth. Youth are mostly seen as beneficiaries under the ASEAN programmes. We need to involve youth from a bottom-up approach in an inclusive manner to participate meaningfully as stakeholders.

The emerging consensus within the roundtable discussion opined that improving youth engagement as key partners is essential to promoting the goals of regional co-operation. The discussion consisted of five broad themes intending to capture the complexity of establishing a regional common identity building; the need to respect and fulfil human rights in the context of intra-ASEAN labour migration and stateless people; dilemmas of doing business in a more sustainable manner; addressing climate change issues and resolving the dispute in the South East China Sea.

A tentative conclusion was that without a meaningful equal participation of youth in the regionalisation process, the creation of a common regional identity will remain as an elitist objective.

Taking note on the desire of young people to participate constructively in the establishment of the regional process, this roundtable requests on the basis of the discussions and recommendations thereon, that the ASEAN state members and the ASEAN organ within their respective spheres of mandate and competence to:

1. Strengthen youth engagement by enhancing the existing mechanism such as the Committee of ASEAN Youth Cooperation (CAYC). This can further improved by increasing ASEAN oriented media and entertainment targeted at youth. The use of mass-media to propagate among youth in respect of different cultures and faith across the region should be encouraged. For example, the creation of TV programmes in the form of Student Exchange Reality Show, ASEAN Idol, and ASEAN Amazing Race.
2. The development of ASEAN identity requires the examination on the role of cultural production in creating new spaces. To promote the cultural profile of youth in ASEAN and to support an important public arena through arts and culture will require intensification and refinement of communication, constant cultural exchanges through ASEAN platform for arts such as the ASEAN Short Firm Festival, ASEAN Music Festival and the ASEAN Arts Festival. The roundtable advocates that school curriculum should be used as agents for beneficial social change and repositories of ASEAN awareness in all ASEAN member states.
3. Genuine initiatives to narrow the development gaps among the different member states require the establishment of an ASEAN youth entrepreneurial class. This will involve an increase access to funds, providing more opportunities to monetise ideas, increasing the ease of doing business and improving access to business. This can be done through diversifying funds like prototype funding, relaxing credit requirements for entrepreneurs

and providing guidelines to private firms to fund young entrepreneurs whilst incentivising private sector involvement in funding entrepreneurs via tax benefits.

4. In the same vein, to inculcate the role of youth to promote the importance of making business and government more responsible and accountable in addressing the issue of sustainability. This will involve strengthening co-operation between civil society organisations, government and the private sectors to establish mechanisms that is built on trust and confidence according to the international standards.
5. One possible proposal which would provide incentive and regulatory oversight is the ASEAN Sustainability Listing (ASL) that can be endorsed by the ASEAN Secretariat. ASL can be used as criteria to assess companies based on environment, social and governance standards. This will allow a company to establish their reputation based on their commitment to sustainability.
6. In response to climate change, the roundtable urges the member states to re-affirm their commitments to recognise the crucial role of youth in addressing climate change. To mitigate the effects of climate change, it is important to reach a regional agreement on effective action. This should be implemented across all ASEAN nations so that there are no trade advantage/disadvantages for individual countries. This agreement should have the goal of implementing an emissions trading system with a capped level of emissions that reduces over time in line with states emission targets. Revenue from the sale of quotas should be used to provide incentives and technological assistance to smaller enterprises who are struggling to reduce their emissions. The realisation of an ASEAN inter-connected electricity grid to take advantage of the regions diversity in renewable energy generation capability should also be explored.
7. There is an increasing interest of young people in the fundamental objectives of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration, in particular the furtherance of peace, development justice and the promotion of respect for human rights. Taking note on the principles and motivating goals set out in the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration and the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of the Migrant workers, the roundtable calls upon the member states to harmonise national legislation on social-protection for semi-skilled migrant workers corresponding to the international human rights treaties and regional standards.
8. The durable solutions for stateless people such as the Rohingyas community are crucially important for people's ideas of a "people centred ASEAN". The roundtable put forward the need for ASEAN member states to share the burden with the international community and UNHCR to strengthen protection of the stateless community. This can be done by ensuring the Rohingyas have adequate access to basic services in their country of asylum.

Ms Ng mentioned that a full report of the Young Leaders Roundtable will be submitted to the ASEAN Coordination Council.

Concluding Remarks by Tan Sri Michael Yeoh, Chairman, ASEAN Leadership Forum and Chief Executive Officer, Asian Strategy & Leadership Institute (ASLI)

Tan Sri Michael Yeoh thanked all the speakers, delegates, sponsor, and everyone who made possible the success of this year's ASEAN Forum. He, then, expressed his hope that the take away from this year's Forum will be forwarded to the ASEAN Secretariat and that there will be action taken to adopt these ideas. He, also, briefly mentioned one of them: the establishment of an ASEAN Equal Friendship Association, aiming to make people more involved and to create a people-centred ASEAN.