
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

Report of the Parliamentary
Delegation to the 36th AIPA
General Assembly,
September 2015

March 2016
Canberra

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Foreword

Australia's participation in the 36th AIPA General Assembly in Malaysia presented the delegation with opportunities to renew ties with parliamentarians of South East Asian and observer parliaments, and to build on Australia's ongoing cooperation with ASEAN countries. Together with my colleague, I was pleased to represent Australia at the General Assembly, a forum which allows Australia to reinforce its commitment to engage with ASEAN and the region more broadly.

The 36th AIPA General Assembly emphasised inclusiveness in the establishment of an ASEAN Community. This theme was echoed throughout Australia's formal dialogue session with ASEAN member countries, which provided an invaluable opportunity to highlight the many positive and productive relationships Australia has with ASEAN countries.

In addition to attending the AIPA General Assembly, the delegation also had the opportunity to attend an extensive program of side meetings, organised with the assistance of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. These meetings, details of which are also included in this report, made a very useful contribution to the overall success of the visit.

I thank my colleague on the delegation, the Honourable Ed Husic MP, whose interest in the region, connections with Malaysia, and enthusiastic and knowledgeable participation made a valuable contribution to discussions.

Finally, I take this opportunity to express the delegation's gratitude to the host nation, Malaysia, for its warm hospitality and excellent organisation of the 36th AIPA General Assembly.

Mr Jason Wood MP
Delegation Leader



Membership of the Delegation

Mr Jason Wood MP (Leader)

The Hon. Ed Husic MP

Ms Peggy Danaee (Secretary)

The 36th AIPA General Assembly

Introduction

- 1.1 The 36th Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) General Assembly was held from 6 to 12 September 2015 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The purpose of AIPA meetings is to address issues of mutual concern to ASEAN member and observer countries.
- 1.2 The General Assembly has been held regularly since 1978. Over 140 parliamentarians attended the 2015 General Assembly, representing 10 member countries. Also represented at the General Assembly were observer delegations from nine parliaments, and seven delegations as guests of the host.
- 1.3 The following summarises some of the issues and outcomes arising from the 36th AIPA General Assembly, with a particular focus on the issues discussed during the dialogue session between ASEAN countries and Australia. The official report of the General Assembly is available at <http://www.aipa36malaysia.gov.my/aipa/report-on-the-36th-aipa-general-assembly/>.¹

1 Viewed 15 February 2016.

AIPA General Assembly – Background

- 1.4 In 1977, 10 years after the formation of ASEAN, the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Organisation (AIPO) was established by the parliaments of Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. AIPO was formed to contribute to the attainment of the goals and aspirations of ASEAN through inter-parliamentary cooperation.
- 1.5 In order to establish a more effective and closely integrated institution, AIPO changed its status from an organisation into an assembly in 2007 and changed its name to the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly, or AIPA.²
- 1.6 The Statutes of AIPO were signed in 1977 by the Heads of parliamentary delegations of Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. The Statutes have been amended several times since that time, most recently in 2014.
- 1.7 The key aims and purposes of AIPA are:
- to promote solidarity, understanding, cooperation and close relations among parliaments of ASEAN member countries, AIPA Special Observers, Observers and other parliamentary organisations;
 - to facilitate the achievement of the goals of ASEAN as constituted in the ASEAN Declaration of August 1967, as well as the ASEAN Vision 2020 taking into account Bali Concord II 2003 leading to the realisation of an ASEAN Community based on three pillars: ASEAN Security Community (ASC); ASEAN Economic Community (AEC); and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC);
 - to establish and maintain exchange and dissemination of information as well as coordination, interaction, and consultations with ASEAN to offer parliamentary contributions to ASEAN integration and familiarising the peoples of Southeast Asia with policies aimed at accelerating the realisation of an ASEAN community;
 - to study, discuss and suggest solutions to problems of common interest and express its views on such issues with the aim of bringing about action and timely response by the members of AIPA;

2 AIPA, 'Background and History (From AIPO to AIPA)', <<http://www.aipasecretariat.org/about/background-history/>> viewed 15 February 2016.

- to keep all AIPA member parliaments informed of steps taken and progress achieved by each parliament in realisation of the aims and purposes of AIPA; and
- to promote the principles of human rights, democracy, peace, security and prosperity in ASEAN.³

1.8 AIPA comprises the following 10 ASEAN member countries:

- Brunei Darussalam;
- Cambodia;
- Indonesia;
- Lao PDR;
- Malaysia;
- Myanmar;
- Philippines;
- Singapore;
- Thailand; and
- Vietnam.

1.9 As part of the 36th AIPA General Assembly, AIPA member countries took part in dialogue sessions with the parliaments of nine observer delegations comprising:

- Australia;
- Belarus;
- China;
- European Parliament;
- India;
- Japan;
- New Zealand;
- Russian Federation; and
- Timor-Leste.

3 AIPA, 'The Statutes of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA)', <<http://www.aipasecretariat.org/about-us/statutes/>> viewed 15 February 2016.

- 1.10 The AIPA Statutes require that a General Assembly of AIPA be held once a year in the country of an AIPA member parliament by rotation in the alphabetical order of the ASEAN countries. The venue and date of previous General Assemblies is shown at **Appendix A**.
- 1.11 Each General Assembly is presided over by the AIPA President, who is the Speaker or President of the AIPA member parliament hosting the Assembly. The President of the 36th AIPA General Assembly was His Excellency Tan Sri Datuk Seri Panglima Pandikar Amin Mulia, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Malaysia.

Opening Ceremony

- 1.12 The opening ceremony took place on Tuesday, 8 September 2015. Welcome addresses were delivered by the President of AIPA and the Prime Minister of Malaysia.
- 1.13 In his opening address, the AIPA President discussed the benefits of cooperation between legislative and executive branches of government in delivering effective democracy, and highlighted AIPA's role in the creation of an ASEAN Community. The AIPA President also noted that the focus of the 36th General Assembly was on the notion of inclusion: 'Engaging a people-oriented, people-centred ASEAN Community towards inclusiveness.'
- 1.14 The President also advocated for formalising a regular ASEAN-AIPA Interface Meeting, with a view to increasing AIPA's participation in broader ASEAN affairs. In this context, the President also noted the role for parliaments in promoting international relations through parliamentary diplomacy.
- 1.15 The President discussed the various forms of democratic government in the region, and the relevant role of parliaments within those models. He noted the influence of factors such as history, religion, culture and value systems in informing the shape taken by respective democratic models.
- 1.16 The Prime Minister of Malaysia, the Honourable Dato' Sri Mohd Najib bin Tun Abdul Razak, referred to the establishment of a unified ASEAN Community by the end of 2015, and noted the growth, stability and resilience of the region. The Prime Minister affirmed the importance of inclusiveness for the region's future. He discussed some of Malaysia's initiatives to increase economic growth, such as the Malaysian Global Innovation and Creativity Centre (MaGIC), and urged cooperation across

the region to develop more such initiatives on a pan-ASEAN scale. The Prime Minister commended the expected launch of the ASEAN Strategic Action Plan for SME (small- and medium-sized enterprise) Development 2016–25, and endorsed programmes for young people such as the ASEAN Young Leaders Summit and the 1ASEAN Entrepreneurship Summit. The Prime Minister also acknowledged initiatives to boost engagement with ASEAN, such as the ‘Go ASEAN’ media platform, and the ASEAN Peoples’ Award.

- 1.17 The Prime Minister also noted that part of the people-centred approach of ASEAN was to ensure the protection of human rights for all, including access to clean air. In this context, the Prime Minister welcomed the ratification by all Member States of the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution.
- 1.18 The Prime Minister acknowledged the role for regional parliaments in ensuring ASEAN’s inclusiveness, including through closer cooperation between legislatures in the region, and through increased cooperation between AIPA and ASEAN.

First Plenary Session

- 1.19 The first plenary session took place on Tuesday, 8 September 2015, immediately following the opening ceremony. Following the appointment of Vice Presidents of the 36th General Assembly, and receipt of messages from heads of state or heads of government,⁴ statements were made by leaders of member and observer delegations, and special guests of the host parliament.
- 1.20 Member countries noted progress towards the establishment of an ASEAN Community; endorsed the theme of the 36th Assembly, ‘Engaging a people-oriented, people-centred ASEAN Community towards inclusiveness’; emphasised the role of parliamentarians as an important link between governments and communities, particularly in the context of promoting ASEAN to communities; discussed some of the ASEAN and AIPA fora and their outcomes; urged greater connectedness in the region, with more collaboration between ASEAN Member States; discussed opportunities for enhancing cooperation between AIPA and ASEAN; and

4 Statements were received from Heads of State/Government from: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

referred to regional progress in relation to the Millenium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals.

- 1.21 Rules and regulations on maritime entitlements were also mentioned, with the Philippines urging AIPA Members to abide by existing rules such as the United Nations Convention on the Laws of the Sea (UNCLOS), and work towards the full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea and conclusion of a legally-binding Code of Conduct in the South China Sea.
- 1.22 Some ASEAN Members also provided updates on domestic developments, such as the performance of Myanmar's Hlattaw since its first session on 30 January 2011, and the three-phase roadmap for the restoration of democratic government in Thailand.
- 1.23 All countries reinforced AIPA's important contributions to maintaining peace and political stability in the region, harmonising regulations and policies in the region, promoting cultural exchange and understanding, protecting cultural, historical and natural values, and improving economic performance in the region.
- 1.24 Following statements by AIPA Member delegations, the Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN, H.E. Dr A. K. P. Mochtan, made a statement on behalf of the ASEAN Secretariat. In his statement, Dr Mochtan expressed the view that building an ASEAN Community was a process rather than an event, and reinforced the importance of putting people's needs at the centre of ASEAN's community building efforts. Dr Mochtan emphasised that AIPA, as a forum of parliamentarians, is well placed to convey and respond to the needs of the people within ASEAN countries.
- 1.25 In his statement to the General Assembly, the Leader of the Australian delegation, Mr Jason Wood MP, congratulated AIPA on its pursuit of greater regional cooperation, and for efforts towards the establishment of an ASEAN Community in the areas of economic, political, security and socio-cultural cooperation.
- 1.26 Australia reinforced its commitment to engaging with the region, and welcomed dialogue relations with ASEAN being formally elevated to a Strategic Partnership. Australia described its government-to-government and people-to-people relations with ASEAN Member States, including through cooperation on matters such as education and security.
- 1.27 Australia drew the Assembly's attention to the New Colombo Plan, which has been opted into by all ASEAN Member States and seeks to provide young Australians with opportunities to live, study and work in the Indo Pacific Region.

- 1.28 Australia noted that ASEAN-centred regional institutions help to balance inter-state dynamics and manage some of the region's more sensitive issues, such as those surrounding tensions in the South China Sea.
- 1.29 Australia reinforced its commitment to ongoing dialogue and cooperation with ASEAN, and welcomed the opportunity to renew ties between the parliaments of the region through AIPA. Mr Wood expressed his confidence that the relationship between Australia and ASEAN would continue to benefit the countries and peoples of the region, and applauded AIPA Members for their continued commitment to peace, stability and cooperation in the region.
- 1.30 The full text of the Australian delegation's statement is at **Appendix B**.

Committee meetings

- 1.31 During the first plenary session, the following committees were formed:
- Committee of Women Parliamentarians of AIPA (WAIPA);
 - Committee on Political Matters;
 - Committee on Economic Matters;
 - Committee on Social Matters; and
 - Committee on Organisational Matters.
- 1.32 The committees formed at each General Assembly consider key issues relevant to ASEAN countries. Each committee produces a statement and approves a series of resolutions for adoption by the AIPA General Assembly. Representatives of AIPA member countries provide the membership of the committees. As an observer country, Australia has no official capacity on the committees.

Dialogue Session with Australia

- 1.33 As part of the General Assembly, time was allocated for AIPA member countries to conduct dialogue sessions with each observer delegation. The topic for dialogue sessions at the 36th AIPA General Assembly was: 'enhancing parliamentary collaborations via a people-oriented, people-centred approach'.

- 1.34 The dialogue session with Australia was chaired by the Hon. Datuk Noor Ehsanuddin Mohd Harun Narrashid, Member of the Parliament of Malaysia. The rapporteur for the session was the Hon. Datuk Linda Tsen Thau Lin, Member of the Parliament of Malaysia. The dialogue commenced with the Australian delegation making a brief statement and inviting comments from delegates representing AIPA member countries. Australia then responded to those comments.
- 1.35 Details of the participants in the dialogue session are provided in the AIPA dialogue report, which appears at **Appendix C**. The following section summarises some of the specific issues raised during the dialogue session.

Brunei Darussalam

- 1.36 Brunei Darussalam discussed diplomatic relations and cooperation with Australia, and referred to the ASEAN–Australia–New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (AANZFTA).
- 1.37 Australia expressed its commitment to continuing cooperation with Brunei Darussalam, particularly on matters such as improving the educational institutions of both countries, and on policing and addressing transnational crime. Australia welcomed the trade relationship with Brunei Darussalam and noted the benefits of AANZFTA for the trading relationship between the two countries.

Cambodia

- 1.38 Cambodia discussed its long-standing bilateral relationship with Australia, and welcomed development assistance and cooperation in the field of education. Australia reinforced the importance of its strong relations and ongoing friendship with Cambodia, and noted that it will dedicate \$79 million in official development assistance to Cambodia over the coming year. Australia affirmed its commitment to ongoing cooperation in education, noting that over 600 Cambodians have studied in Australia through the Australia Award Scholarships.
- 1.39 Cambodia emphasised the ongoing importance of parliamentary exchanges, capacity building and other people-to-people exchanges between Cambodia and Australia. Australia welcomed the existing parliamentary exchanges between the two countries, noted increased people-to-people exchanges through the New Colombo Plan, and expressed its desire to continue working constructively with Cambodia.

Indonesia

- 1.40 Indonesia welcomed its relations with Australia, as its 'next door neighbour', and noted the long-standing relationship between the two countries. Indonesia noted that it was a recipient of development assistance from Australia, in the order of \$366 million this year.
- 1.41 Indonesia discussed the issues of terrorism, violent extremism and radicalisation, and the different types of measures used to respond to these challenges in the region. Indonesia also called for strengthened people-to-people ties with Australia, and requested assistance through the transfer of technology in the areas of agriculture and energy security.
- 1.42 Australia noted Indonesia's interest in assistance to address issues of corruption, and conveyed its wishes for a fruitful upcoming meeting of the Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption. Australia also noted with interest Indonesia's de-radicalisation and reintegration programmes and commended Indonesia for its efforts in these areas.
- 1.43 Australia noted Indonesia's requests for assistance in technology transfer and assistance in the areas of agriculture and energy, and affirmed its commitment to its strong and significant relationship with Indonesia.

Lao PDR

- 1.44 Lao PDR conveyed its appreciation for its relationship with Australia, and discussed matters of trade and investment, and assistance in the areas of education and disaster management.
- 1.45 Australia affirmed its commitment to its relationship with Lao PDR, and warmly welcomed recent exchanges of visits between the two countries. Australia noted its ongoing support for trade and investment, particularly through the Second Trade Development Facility programme which seeks to support Lao PDR to develop trade and integration with regional and global economies.
- 1.46 In relation to education, Australia described some of the assistance it provides to Lao PDR, including \$86 million through the Basic Education Quality and Access programme, which seeks to improve student participation and educational outcomes. Australia commented on cooperation on human resource capacity building, both through the Laos-Australia Institute and the Australia Award Scholarships, which have supported over 1,000 Lao students to study in Australia.

- 1.47 Australia also acknowledged the request from Lao PDR for assistance in disaster management, and expressed its commitment to providing ongoing cooperation in a range of areas. Australia warmly welcomed its ongoing and growing ties with Lao PDR.

Malaysia

- 1.48 Malaysia noted its strong people-to-people links with Australia, which had become further strengthened over recent years, particularly through cooperation in the aftermath of the MH370 and MH17 tragedies. Australia affirmed its commitment to providing assistance into the future, and noted that the two countries' long histories of shared links had resulted in a strong relationship that would endure beyond minor disagreements.
- 1.49 Malaysia also discussed trade between the two countries, as well as education, opportunities for people-to-people links, and cooperation in addressing the trafficking of drugs. Australia noted that the two countries have Memoranda of Understanding on Transnational Crime Cooperation (2014), Maritime Security (2011), and Combating Transnational Crime and Developing Police Cooperation (2009). In addition, Australia welcomed the Malaysia–Australia Free Trade Agreement, the consequential reduction in barriers between the economies of the two countries, and the benefits this had for the people of Australia and Malaysia.
- 1.50 In relation to education, it was noted that approximately 20,000 Malaysians study in Australia each year, and that Australian universities had established campuses in Malaysia. Australia looked forward to the New Colombo Plan bringing more Australians to Malaysia, and the people-to-people links this would reinforce in the coming years.

Myanmar

- 1.51 Myanmar welcomed the warm relationship between the two countries, and Hon. Mr Nyunt Tin, representing the delegation from Myanmar, highlighted his personal links with Australia. Myanmar welcomed official development assistance from Australia, discussed issues relating to environmentally sustainable mining, and sought Australia's assistance in transferring expertise in this area. Australia expressed its commitment to continued cooperation with and assistance to Myanmar, and welcomed the honourable delegate's ongoing interest in Australia.
- 1.52 Myanmar noted its relatively young parliament, and expressed its gratitude for assistance and cooperation from the Australian Parliament. Australia expressed its ongoing commitment to capacity building,

including through exchanges in parliamentarians and parliamentary officials, noting that officials from the Australian Parliament had visited Myanmar recently. Australia also highlighted outcomes in good governance through the Myanmar–Australia Partnership.

Philippines

- 1.53 The Philippines noted its strong relationship with Australia, and requested more cooperation from Australia in agricultural production, information and communication technologies, and other areas with a view to assisting the Philippines to build a more robust economy. The Philippines also highlighted and welcomed Australia’s assistance with emergency responses to natural disasters.
- 1.54 Australia noted current areas of assistance, such as the Philippines–Australia Public Financial Management Program which intends to contribute to better economic governance, supporting the Philippines to build a modern financial management system. Australia also noted cooperation through disaster management assistance and welcomed the warm relationship between the two countries, and Mr Husic highlighted personal connections to the Philippines through his constituency.

Thailand

- 1.55 Thailand welcomed its relationship with Australia and discussed areas of mutual concern such as counter-terrorism, security, and trade relations. Australia expressed its sadness at the recent bombing incident in Bangkok, and noted that security and terrorism issues were relevant to all countries in the region. Australia noted that the Australian Federal Police and the Royal Thai Police already cooperate on issues such as people trafficking and transnational crime, and welcomed further collaboration and cooperation on security matters with its regional neighbours.
- 1.56 In relation to trade, Australia welcomed the Thailand–Australia Free Trade Agreement (TAFTA), which had more than doubled trade between the two countries. Australia welcomed the growth in two-way trade, and welcomed diplomatic ties between the two countries.

Vietnam

- 1.57 Vietnam welcomed its long-standing and close relations with Australia, which had been forged through immigration and education ties in particular. Vietnam called for enhanced cooperation between ASEAN and Australia in the areas of trade, tourism, education, poverty alleviation and other areas of mutual concern.
- 1.58 Australia welcomed its strong ties to Vietnam, and noted that there were currently almost 500 Vietnamese students living and studying in Australia through the Australia Award Scholarships, the majority of whom were female. Australia noted the relevance of this particularly in light of the theme of inclusiveness for this AIPA General Assembly. Australia reiterated its commitment to enhancing cooperation and collaboration with ASEAN on a range of mutual concerns into the future.

Delegation comments

- 1.59 In general discussion, issues canvassed included innovation and entrepreneurship – including the Malaysian Global Innovation and Creative Centre (MaGIC) – threats posed by terrorism and violent extremism, trade issues, economic performance around the world and ASEAN’s role in the global market, climate change, and people trafficking.
- 1.60 Australia noted its strong relationship with ASEAN, which commenced when Australia became ASEAN’s first Dialogue Partner in 1974. Australia’s support for ASEAN, and its ongoing engagement with the region, was a strong basis for cooperation.
- 1.61 Australia welcomed its involvement with the AIPA General Assembly as an observer, and noted Australia’s ongoing commitment to the region and to this forum. Australia thanked dialogue participants for their thoughtful engagement with the session, expressed its appreciation to the Chair and Rapporteur for a well-organised session and welcomed the opportunity to hold productive and warm discussions as a dialogue partner with ASEAN neighbours.

Figure 1.1 Delegates during the Dialogue Session



Second plenary session and closing ceremony

1.62 The second plenary session and closing ceremony were held on 11 September 2015.

The Chairs of the following committees presented their respective reports: Political Matters; Economic Matters; Social Matters; Organisational Matters; Women Parliamentarians of AIPA (WAIPA); Dialogue with AIPA Observer Parliaments; and Joint Communiqué. The reports were approved and resolutions adopted by the General Assembly. The following is a summary of resolutions of some of the committees.

Committee on Political Matters

1.63 The General Assembly adopted resolutions of the Committee on Political Matters relating to the following issues:

- adoption of the report of the AIPA-ASEAN Interface at the 26th ASEAN Summit;
- adoption of the Report of the 7th AIPA Caucus Meeting in Siem Reap, Cambodia;

- strengthening the ASEAN Community through good governance toward inclusiveness; and
- strengthening ASEAN Political Security Community towards inclusiveness.

Committee on Economic Matters

1.64 The General Assembly adopted resolutions of the Committee on Economic Matters relating to the following issues:

- enhancing inter-regional cooperation and intra-regional integration in trade and industry;
- narrowing development gaps among ASEAN Member States; and
- promoting parliaments' roles in enhancing the implementation of ASEAN Economic Community commitments beyond 2015.

Committee on Social Matters

1.65 The General Assembly adopted resolutions of the Committee on Social Matters relating to the following issues:

- protecting the rights of older persons and enhancing their quality of life;
- enhancing ASEAN higher education towards an inclusive ASEAN Community;
- adoption of the report of the 12th meeting of the AIPA Fact Finding Committee to Combat the Drug Menace (AIFOCOM); and
- formation of the AIFOCOM Technical Working Group.

Committee on Organisational Matters

1.66 The General Assembly adopted resolutions of the Committee on Organisational Matters relating to the following issues:

- amendments to the Statutes of AIPA;
- amendments to the staff regulations, financial regulations, and instruction manual for staff of the AIPA secretariat;
- financial reports of the AIPA secretariat;
- estimated budget for the AIPA secretariat;

- annual contribution to the AIPA Special Fund by AIPA Member Parliaments (adopted subject to the concurrence of each Member Parliament);
- payment of gratuity to the family of the late Mr. Sudarsono (AIPA Security Officer);
- adoption of the 2015 work plan of the AIPA secretariat;
- strengthening law enforcement and regional cooperation to combat wildlife crime;
- AIPA publications;
- continuation of the joint programme with the German Foreign Office (FFO);
- extension of office of President and the Chairman and Committee Members of the Executive Committee;
- appreciation for the services of the President of AIPA; and
- date and venue of the 37th AIPA General Assembly.

Committee on Women Parliamentarians of AIPA (WAIPA)

1.67 The General Assembly adopted WAIPA Committee resolutions relating to the following issues:

- recognition of post-2015 development agenda on gender equality;
- promoting a culture of respect and the rights of women and girls towards inclusiveness; and
- strengthening legal frameworks to eliminate violence against women and children in ASEAN.

Committee on Dialogue with Observer Parliaments

1.68 The reports of the dialogue sessions were considered and adopted by the General Assembly.

Committee on Joint Communiqué

1.69 The Committee had drafted the Joint Communiqué, which was subsequently approved by the General Assembly (see below).

Date and venue of the 37th AIPA General Assembly

- 1.70 The AIPA President reported that, as that no Member Parliament had indicated their ability to host the 37th AIPA General Assembly, it had been decided that the matter would be brought to the Executive Committee, which would meet no later than September 2016.

Signing of the Joint Communiqué

- 1.71 The leaders of AIPA member country delegations signed the Joint Communiqué. The text of the document is at **Appendix D**.

Closing Ceremony

- 1.72 The President of AIPA and Speaker of the House of Representatives of Malaysia, His Excellency Tan Sri Datuk Seri Panglima Pandikar Amin Mulia, gave the closing speech for the 36th General Assembly. He highlighted the success of the General Assembly in debating and reaching agreement on some 25 resolutions, relating to common interests such as political, economic, and social matters, as well as organisational issues relating to AIPA. He highlighted the success of the meetings being due to the cooperation between participants, and their willingness to share their views freely and respectfully.
- 1.73 The President noted some of the complexities associated with the hosting of various AIPA fora in 2016, noting the timing of general elections in many AIPA Member States. These challenges had resulted in Lao PDR offering to host the 8th AIPA Caucus in 2016, and there being no host for the AIFCOM meeting in 2016.
- 1.74 Additionally, the host of the 37th AIPA General Assembly had yet to be determined. The President expressed his hope that a host for the 37th General Assembly would be identified before September 2016, and also noted that these arrangements had necessitated an extension in the period of his presidency of AIPA.

Conclusion

- 1.75 The 36th AIPA General Assembly provided a valuable forum for strengthening bonds between the parliaments of ASEAN countries. The Assembly presented Australia with an important opportunity to discuss matters of mutual importance with ASEAN countries, and to reaffirm and renew friendships with parliamentarians in the region.
- 1.76 The transformation and integration of ASEAN were clearly key priorities for the region, and for the host of the 36th General Assembly, Malaysia. This impression was reinforced during the Delegation's side meetings, which are briefly outlined in Chapter 2 of this report.
- 1.77 The Delegation appreciated the opportunity to discuss Australia's important relationships with neighbouring countries. Australia's continued engagement with AIPA and its role in the region were noted by several delegations. The benefits of the Australian Parliament's continued attendance and participation in the AIPA General Assembly were clear to the Delegation, and confirmed that engagement with AIPA was one important aspect of Australia's overall engagement with ASEAN.
- 1.78 The Delegation expresses its sincere appreciation to the hosting nation, Malaysia, for its warm hospitality and a professionally conducted and successful 36th AIPA General Assembly, and conveys its wishes for a similarly successful 37th General Assembly.

Figure 1.2 The Delegation



Additional activities

- 2.1 In addition to its participation at the 36th AIPA General Assembly, the Delegation's visit to Malaysia also incorporated an extensive programme of side meetings with parliamentary and community leaders, and with representatives from industry to discuss innovation and entrepreneurship. These meetings are outlined briefly in this chapter.

Speaker of the Malaysian House of Representatives

- 2.2 The Delegation had the great pleasure and honour to have a side meeting with the President of AIPA, His Excellency Tan Sri Datuk Seri Panglima Pandikar Amin Mulia, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Malaysia.
- 2.3 During the meeting, some of the features of both the Malaysian and Australian Houses of Representatives were discussed. This included the operation of the Federation Chamber in Australia, and each legislature's experience with various opportunities for members within the Parliament, including questions without notice, supplementary questions, interventions, and discussions of matters of public importance.
- 2.4 Discussion also covered other matters of mutual interest, including media interest in parliamentary proceedings, and the institutional cultures particular to each legislature. Delegates also heard about some of the different responsibilities of Members of Parliament in Malaysia, as compared with Members' roles in Australia.
- 2.5 The Speaker expressed his desire to visit the Australian Parliament in future, with a view to engaging in further discussions about the structure and operation of the Australian Parliament, including possible initiatives

that may be of relevance to the Malaysian Parliament. The Delegation warmly welcomed the opportunity to meet with the Speaker during a possible future visit to Australia, and expressed its gratitude to the Speaker for his time and thoughtful contributions to an informative discussion.

Selangor State Legislative Assembly

- 2.6 The Delegation visited the Selangor State Legislative Assembly, the 56-member, unicameral legislature of Selangor, which is one of the 13 Malaysian states. During the visit, the Delegation had the opportunity to hear about the structure of the Legislative Assembly, as well as its operation and its connection to the national parliament. The Delegation was also honoured to meet with the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, YB Puan Hannah Yeoh Tseow Suan.
- 2.7 The Delegation heard about the operation of the Legislative Assembly, including the system of 10 very active committees and some of the recent reforms implemented. Other issues discussed included staffing resources available to Members, developments in domestic politics, and recent local concerns including the availability of water resources.

Figure 2.1 The Delegation with the Speaker of the Selangor State Legislative Assembly



Youth Parliamentarians

- 2.8 The Delegation had the opportunity to meet with members of Malaysia's Youth Parliament and political staffers. Attendees included:
- Mr Sayed Mohsen;
 - Mr Rizmel Nazrin;
 - Ms Zarra Zuriaty Modh Rawi;
 - Mr Tai Zee Kin;
 - Ms Amirah Amir;
 - Ms Aisya Bakar; and
 - Mr Asyraf Adlan.
- 2.9 The Delegation learned about the structure and operation of Malaysia's Youth Parliament, and heard about some of the key issues debated in the forum. The Delegation also had the opportunity to hear views on issues pertinent to youth in Malaysia, including social issues, counter-terrorism and de-radicalisation, tourism, and social media.
- 2.10 The Delegation also learned about the structure of the Malaysian Parliament and the government more broadly, including issues such as the structure of the Senate and opportunities for backbench members of Parliament.
- 2.11 The meeting also discussed the importance of building and strengthening the relationship between Malaysia and Australia, and how this might best be achieved. The Delegation heard about the importance of cultural diplomacy in Malaysia, and discussed the people-to-people ties between Malaysia and Australia.
- 2.12 The Delegation was pleased to have the opportunity to meet with so many intelligent, articulate and passionate young Malaysians, and is grateful for the energy and time given by participants to what was a lively and informative discussion.

Figure 2.2 Meeting with members of the Malaysian Youth Parliament and political staffers



Global Movement of Moderates

- 2.13 The Delegation met with Dato' Saifuddin Abdullah, Chief Executive Officer of the Global Movement of Moderates (GMM) and former member of the Malaysian Parliament. GMM advocates for moderation as a means to achieving peace and harmony. It encourages moderate voices to outweigh the voices of extremism, an aim that has become increasingly important in the context of the rise of extremism around the world. GMM also seeks to assist government to incorporate the concepts of moderation into laws, policies and programmes.
- 2.14 Dato' Saifuddin provided some background on the domestic political context and some of the relevant cultural factors in Malaysia, including the coexistence of people of different races and religions and the extent to which segregation was a feature of Malaysian society. The Delegation also heard about the proposals for a National Harmony Act to replace existing sedition laws, and for a racial discrimination framework which would seek to provide mechanisms for redress, and the various views on such proposals.

- 2.15 The Delegation also sought Dato' Saifuddin's insights on de-radicalisation initiatives, noting the mixed or unknown rate of success of such programmes. The causes of extremism were discussed, and it was noted that the concepts of social cohesion and inclusiveness were important in preventing extremism and radicalisation.
- 2.16 The Delegation gained an appreciation for the complex interrelationship between societal, political, and institutional factors, and their impacts on empowerment and cohesion. The Delegation was grateful for the opportunity to learn more about GMM and its work, and expresses its thanks to Dato' Saifuddin for taking the time to engage with delegates on such a range of important issues.

Innovation and entrepreneurship

- 2.17 The Delegation sought meetings around the issues of innovation and entrepreneurship, through a visit to the Malaysian Global Innovation and Creative Centre (MaGIC), and meetings with representatives from Agensi Inovasi Malaysia (AIM) and the Multimedia Development Corporation (MdeC).
- 2.18 MaGIC was established in 2014 to foster and develop a vibrant startup culture in Malaysia. It does so through various programmes designed to guide entrepreneurs through the three key phases of their enterprises: education; acceleration; and exposure. One programme that focuses on the first of these phases is the MaGIC Academy, which delivers courses, seminars and workshops on a range of topics to support entrepreneurs with their start-ups. Programme delivery is flexible to suit a variety of needs, from face-to-face to online, from part-time to full-time.
- 2.19 The Delegation's visit coincided with the MaGIC Accelerator Program (MAP) being held at MaGIC headquarters. The MAP involved 50 teams of start-ups, 30 of which were Malaysian, in addition to a further 25 social enterprises. Of the foreign teams, the majority were from ASEAN countries. Delegates saw first-hand some of the MAP sessions, which placed an emphasis on educating, guiding and mentoring start-up teams, with the ultimate aim of introducing start-ups to investors.
- 2.20 The Delegation was impressed with the facilities available to start-up teams, and with the energy given to providing participants with a worthwhile and vibrant atmosphere in which to nurture their enterprises.

Figure 2.3 Mr Husic with MaGIC Chief Executive Officer, Ms Cheryl Yeoh



- 2.21 The Delegation met with Mr Naser Jaafar, Chief Operating Officer of Agensi Inovasi Malaysia (AIM), an agency which commenced operations in July 2011 as part of a broader push by the Government to embrace innovation as a means of boosting economic activity in Malaysia.
- 2.22 AIM looks beyond innovation in the traditional sectors of science and technology, and seeks to encourage innovation in other areas, such as financial services. The intention is for AIM to build capacity in innovation-related thinking and practices in all sectors of the economy, before being formally wound up in 2020.
- 2.23 The Delegation heard about AIM's role relative to other government bodies, and noted that, where MaGIC focused on entrepreneurs, the focus of AIM was broader, and sought to pursue innovation across all sectors.

2.24 AIM's approaches to boosting innovation include:

- changing the education system to introduce a greater focus on critical thinking skills;
- encouraging greater innovation by the community, primarily through non-government organisations;
- facilitating enhanced collaboration between industry and academia;
- supporting organisations to assess and boost the extent of their innovation; and
- catalysing commercialisation.

2.25 The Delegation also met with Dato' Yasmin Mahmood, Chief Executive Officer of the Multimedia Development Corporation (MdeC). Discussions covered a range of technological and related developments in Malaysia, including:

- the creation of a Multimedia Super Corridor, which seeks to position Malaysia as a technological hub in the region, with a view to attracting tech-driven investors and start-ups;
- the need for the education system to respond to new technical skills required by changes in the economy, including the launch of a new Technical Vocational and Educational Training (TVET) pathway through the education system, noting that the combination of skills required could not be met solely through the existing academic pathway; and
- the importance of creating appropriate innovation and start-up ecosystems at the regional level within ASEAN, to support new drivers of economic growth.

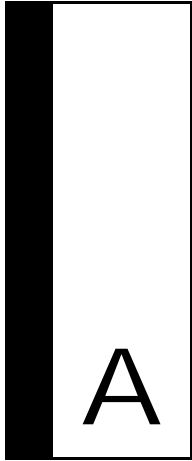
2.26 The Delegation acknowledges the generosity of representatives from MaGIC, AIM and MdeC in sharing their time and making themselves available for the fruitful and wide-ranging discussions with delegates. Malaysia's focus on innovation and entrepreneurship was certainly evidenced in the various bodies created to support these transformations in the economy, as well as in the purposeful activity in which these bodies are engaged.

Figure 2.4 MaGIC representatives describing the Accelerator Program processes



- 2.27 The Delegation found the programme of side meetings to be a valuable addition to its participation in the AIPA General Assembly. It made excellent use of delegates' limited time in country, and the Delegation was grateful for the opportunity to gain insights into many issues relevant to existing and emerging issues in Australia.
- 2.28 The Delegation expresses its thanks to the embassy staff for their efforts in arranging the program and assisting with arrangements, and indeed to all who took the time to meet with the Delegation during its visit to Malaysia.

Mr Jason Wood MP
 Delegation Leader
 March 2016



Appendix A: Date and venue of AIPA General Assemblies

Since its inception in 1977, AIPA has held annual meetings of its General Assembly as follows:

- 1st General Assembly of AIPO in Singapore, 26–28 September 1978
- 2nd General Assembly of AIPO in Bangkok, Thailand, 27 September to 3 October 1979
- 3rd General Assembly of AIPO in Jakarta, Indonesia, 2–6 September 1980
- 4th General Assembly of AIPO in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 2–6 February 1982
- 5th General Assembly of AIPO in Manila, Philippines, 5–9 April 1983
- 6th General Assembly of AIPO in Singapore, 5–7 October 1983
- 7th General Assembly of AIPO in Bangkok, Thailand, 2–6 October 1984
- 8th General Assembly of AIPO in Jakarta, Indonesia, 22–29 September 1985
- 9th General Assembly of AIPO in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 24–30 January 1988
- 10th General Assembly of AIPO in Manila, Philippines, 21–26 August 1989
- 11th General Assembly of AIPO in Singapore, 10–15 September 1990
- 12th General Assembly of AIPO in Bangkok, Thailand, 18–23 November 1991
- 13th General Assembly of AIPO in Jakarta, Indonesia, 21–26 September 1992
- 14th General Assembly of AIPO in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 19–26 September 1993
- 15th General Assembly of AIPO in Manila, Philippines, 19–24 September 1994
- 16th General Assembly of AIPO in Singapore, 18–23 September 1995
- 17th General Assembly of AIPO in Phuket, Thailand, 16–21 September 1996

- 18th General Assembly of AIPO in Bali, Indonesia, 1–6 September 1997
- 19th General Assembly of AIPO in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 24–28 August 1998
- 20th General Assembly of AIPO in Manila, Philippines, 19–24 September 1999
- 21st General Assembly of AIPO in Singapore, 10–15 September 2000
- 22nd General Assembly of AIPO in Bangkok, Thailand, 2–7 September 2001
- 23rd General Assembly of AIPO in Hanoi, Vietnam, 8–13 September 2002
- 24th General Assembly of AIPO in Jakarta, Indonesia, 7–12 September 2003
- 25th General Assembly of AIPO in Phnom Phen, Cambodia, 12–17 September 2004
- 26th General Assembly of AIPO in Vientiane, Lao PDR, 18–23 September 2005
- 27th General Assembly of AIPA in Cebu, Philippines, 10–15 September 2006
- 28th General Assembly of AIPA in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 18–24 August 2007
- 29th General Assembly of AIPA in Singapore, 19–24 August 2008
- 30th General Assembly of AIPA in Pattaya City, Thailand, 2–8 August 2009
- 31st General Assembly of AIPA in Hanoi, Vietnam, 19–25 September 2010
- 32nd General Assembly of AIPA in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 18–24 September 2011
- 33rd General Assembly of AIPA in Lombok, Indonesia, 16–22 September 2012
- 34th General Assembly of AIPA in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam, 17–23 September 2013
- 35th General Assembly of AIPA in Vientiane, Lao PDR, 14–20 September 2014
- 36th General Assembly of AIPA in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 6–12 September 2015



Appendix B: Statement by Leader of the Australian Delegation

It is a great pleasure and honour to address the 36th General Assembly of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly here in Kuala Lumpur. On behalf of the Australian delegation, allow me to express our sincere appreciation to Your Excellency, President of AIPA, and the people of Malaysia, for the warm hospitality extended to us.

The Assembly is taking place at a significant time for ASEAN, as well as for Australia's relations with ASEAN. As it moves towards its 50th birthday, ASEAN continues to make great progress in strengthening regional cooperation, reflected in its current aspirations towards achieving the ASEAN Economic Community, Political-Security Community and Socio-Cultural Community.

Australia appreciates the contribution ASEAN has made to peace, regional cooperation and prosperity in Southeast Asia. Australia is proud to have been the first country to establish a dialogue partnership with ASEAN, and our relationship now spans over 40 years. Our participation in this AIPA General Assembly provides us with a welcome opportunity to renew our friendships and to reaffirm the very valuable relationships and cooperation Australia has with ASEAN.

Australia has also been a keen participant in various ASEAN-related meetings held so far this year, including the ASEAN-Australia Post Ministerial Conference, the East Asia Summit Foreign Ministers Meeting, and the ASEAN Regional Forum Foreign Ministers' Meeting, all of which were held here in Kuala Lumpur in early August and attended by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon. Julie Bishop MP.

In addition to this, we played an active role in:

- The AEM–Closer Economic Relations Consultations, which brings together Australia, New Zealand and ASEAN partners to discuss the ASEAN–Australia New Zealand Free Trade Area;
- The East Asia Summit Economic Ministers’ Meeting; and
- The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Ministerial Meeting.

These three meetings were attended by the Minister for Trade and Investment, the Hon. Andrew Robb AO MP, and are very important in terms of further strengthening our economic ties.

And of course, every year our Prime Minister attends the East Asia Summit in November.

We also welcome the adoption of the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on a People-Oriented, People-Centred ASEAN, aimed at promoting a cohesive and inclusive regional body. This is a subject which we look forward to engaging with during this Assembly.

Over four decades, Australia has repeatedly demonstrated our support for ASEAN and its contributions to regional peace and prosperity. We have done this through building close, practical and cooperative working relationships across a broad range of areas, and we have provided development assistance aimed at increasing economic prosperity.

We were very pleased that, in November last year, ASEAN-Australia Dialogue Relations were formally elevated from a Comprehensive Partnership to a Strategic Partnership. With this new level of Partnership, we look forward to biennial leaders’ summits and cooperation to promote economic relations and maintain regional peace, security and stability.

Areas of cooperation include: maritime matters, non-traditional security issues, counter-terrorism, drug control, transport and logistics, tourism, energy, disaster management, education, and environmental issues.

While cooperation between our governments continues, relations between our peoples are also being expanded and deepened. Education is a key element in our cooperation. We are pleased to welcome more than 100,000 students from ASEAN countries who are now studying in Australia, including through Endeavour and Australia Awards scholarships to citizens of ASEAN countries.

A key feature of our relationship with ASEAN is the deeply embedded culture of two-way partnership. The notion that Australia has much to learn from our friends in the region, underpins the New Colombo Plan, our scheme to provide

opportunities to young Australians to live, study and work in the Indo Pacific Region, including ASEAN countries. The New Colombo Plan has been rolled out to all ASEAN member states and over 2,250 young Australians are now studying and working in ASEAN countries through the Plan.

However, if we are to ensure that economic growth and our people-to-people links continue, we need to have a secure region, and it is also in this area that Australia and ASEAN are building common strengths.

The ASEAN-Australia Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism has assisted, and we have also committed to expanding cooperation on transnational crime and terrorism, including through the ASEAN Regional Forum and regular Senior Officials' Meetings.

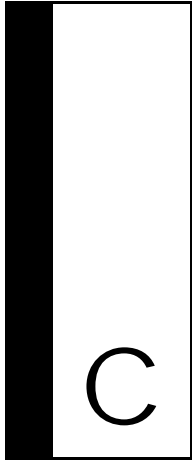
Australia also cooperates with the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation, and I also note that the 10th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime will be held in Kuala Lumpur later this year.

Both ASEAN and Australia see the East Asian Summit as a key institution for helping the region manage its strategic challenges, and Australia looks forward to participating in the 10th anniversary Summit in Kuala Lumpur in November this year.

ASEAN-centred regional institutions help to balance inter-state dynamics and manage some of the region's more sensitive issues. These include the ongoing tensions in the South China Sea, which affect claimants and non-claimants alike, including by virtue of the area's role as a major thoroughfare for international trade. For example, around 60 per cent of Australian exports and 40 per cent of our imports pass through those waters. We welcome the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting Joint Communique, which, among other things, expressed serious concerns over recent and ongoing developments in the South China Sea.

Finally I note that ASEAN continues to participate in the G20 meetings. ASEAN's ongoing participation in the G20 is a welcome acknowledgement of its important role as a constructive and successful regional organisation.

As ASEAN progresses through its fifth decade and its role grows globally, Australia warmly welcomes this opportunity to renew friendships between our parliaments. We are confident that the relationship between Australia and ASEAN will continue to benefit our countries and peoples, and we applaud ASEAN nations for their continued commitment to peace, stability and cooperation in the region. On behalf of the Australian delegation, I thank you for your invitation to participate in this Assembly, and we look forward to a valuable and informative gathering.



Appendix C: AIPA Report on the Dialogue with Australia

ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly 36th General Assembly 6–12 September 2014, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

REPORT ON DIALOGUE WITH AUSTRALIA

The Dialogue session was presided by Hon. Datuk Noor Ehsanuddin Mohd Harun Narrashid, Member of Parliament Malaysia, and Hon. Datuk Linda Tsen Thau Lin, Member Parliament of Malaysia as the Rapporteur. The dialogue session began at 1.30 pm at Kedah Room, Shangri-La Hotel, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 9 September 2015.

DELEGATES FROM AUSTRALIA

Mr Jason Wood MP
The Hon. Ed Husic MP

DELEGATES OF AIPA MEMBER PARLIAMENTS**Brunei Darussalam**

Hon. Haji Awang Ahmad Morshidi Pehin Orang Kaya Digadong Seri Diraja Dato
Laila Utama Haji Awang Abdul Rahman
Hon. Pehin Datu Imam Dato Paduka Seri Setia Ustaz Haji Awang Abdul Hamid
Bakal
Hon. Awang Haji Gapor Haji Mohd Daud Karim

Cambodia

Hon. Hun Many

Indonesia

Hon. Sarwo Budi Wiryanti Sukamdani

Lao PDR

Hon. Dr. Souvanpheng Bouphanouvong
Hon. Bountone Chanthaphone

Malaysia

Hon. Dato' Noraini binti Ahmad

Myanmar

Hon. Mr Nyunt Tin

Philippines

Hon. Evelio Leonardia

Thailand

Hon. ACM Chanut Ratana-Ubol

Vietnam

Hon. Nguyen Huu Quang

THE MEETING DISCUSSED THE FOLLOWING ISSUES:

Australia underlined the importance of the ASEAN–Australia relationship, underpinned by comprehensive economic partnership and extensive engagement in all the three pillars. Most ASEAN Member States have had long diplomatic relationships with Australia. Among the issues discussed in this dialogue were as follows:

1. **Education:** Australia has provided education opportunities for students from ASEAN by offering places at university campuses in Australia and at the branch campuses in ASEAN Member States. The meeting of ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference (PMC) + 1 supported the efforts to intensify people-to-people links especially on education. The New Colombo Plan will be expanded to ASEAN Member States beginning 2015. This program provides scholarships and mobility funds for Australian undergraduates allowing them take short courses, participate in internship programmes, including practicum, research and mentoring in Indo-Pacific regions.
2. **Tourism:** Australia has been a contributing country to the tourism development industry in ASEAN countries.
3. **Terrorism:** Australia noted the emerging issue of terrorism and violent extremism in Australia and in ASEAN Member States, and expressed its desire to continue to work collaboratively with ASEAN Member States to further peace and security in the region.
4. **Disaster Management:** Cooperation between ASEAN and Australia on disaster management, environment, education and people-to-people exchanges has been renewed under the new PoA to implement the ASEAN–Australia Strategic Partnership (2015–2019).
5. **Trade, Investment and Economic Cooperation:** Australia has been one of the main trading partners for ASEAN Member States. The most important and fastest growing sector of Australia's economy is industry specifically mining, manufacturing, construction and agriculture.
6. **Defense and Security:** Australia has participated in a series of consultative meetings on defense and security with ASEAN. Australia has demonstrated its commitment to regional peace and security to ASEAN when it acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) in 2005.
7. **Corruption:** Issues of Corruption is continuing be addressed by ASEAN Member States to widen their business activities and to attract domestic and foreign investment.

8. **Human and Drug Trafficking:** Issues of Human and Drug Trafficking are of great concern to Australia.

And concluded with the following outcomes:

1. Australia will continue providing education opportunities for ASEAN Member States. ASEAN Member States will participate in the New Colombo Plan.
2. Australia has extended its cooperation and resources in assisting ASEAN in disaster management. For example, Australia has shown its commitment and assistance in the search operations for the missing MH370 aircraft.
3. As ASEAN is a popular tourist destination for Australians, it is expected that the arrival of Australian tourists to ASEAN will increase.
4. Cooperation between Australia and ASEAN Member States is imperative to combat the issues and problems of terrorism as well as human and drug trafficking.
5. Australia is and will continue to be an important ASEAN economics partner.
6. Australia will continue to participate in a series of consultative meetings on defense and security with ASEAN.
7. Australia notes calls for the establishment of an ASEAN Integrity Community to protect against serious corruption risks.

As there were no further comments from any delegates, the Chairperson called the dialogue session to close at 3.30 p.m.

The Report of the Dialogue with Australia was presented to the 36th AIPA General Assembly.

Hon. Datuk Noor Ehsanuddin Mohd Harun Narrashid
CHAIRPERSON

Hon. Datuk Linda Tsen Thau Lin
RAPPORTEUR



Appendix D: 36th AIPA Joint Communiqué

ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly 36th General Assembly 6–12 September 2015, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

INTRODUCTION

1. Pursuant to the decision of the 35th General Assembly of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) held in Vientiane, Lao PDR on 14–20 September 2014, and in accordance with the Statutes of AIPA, the 36th General Assembly was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 6–12 September 2015 under the theme, “Engaging a People-Oriented, People-Centred ASEAN Community towards Inclusiveness”.
2. His Excellency Tan Sri Datuk Seri Panglima Pandikar Amin Mulia, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Malaysia and President of AIPA presided over the 36th AIPA General Assembly.

DELEGATIONS

3. The Delegations from **Brunei Darussalam** led by H.E. Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Lela Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Abd. Rahman Bin Dato Setia Haji Mohamed Taib; the **Kingdom of Cambodia** led by H.E. Samdech Akka Moha Ponhea Chakrei Heng Samrin; the **Republic of Indonesia** led by Hon. Mrs Sarwo Budi Wiryanti Sukamdani; **Lao People’s Democratic Republic** H.E. Madam Pany Yathotou; **Malaysia** led by Hon. Datuk Seri Dr. Ronald Kiandee; the **Republic of the Union of Myanmar** led by H.E. Nanda Kyaw Swa; the **Republic of the Philippines** led by

Hon. Al Francis Bichara; the **Kingdom of Thailand** led by Hon. Mr. Peerasak Porjit; and the **Socialist Republic of Viet Nam** led by H.E. Mr. Huynh Ngoc Son.

4. The Observer Delegations from **Australia** led by Hon. Mr. Jason Wood; the **Republic of Belarus** led by Hon. Mr. Vitaly Busko; the **People's Republic of China** led by Hon. Cao Weizhou; **European Parliament** led by Hon. Dr. Werner Langen; the **Republic of India** led by Hon. Ganesh Singh; **Japan** led by Hon. Fusae Ota; **New Zealand** led by Hon. Kanwaljit Singh Bakshi; **Russian Federation** led by Hon Andrey Klimov; and **Timor Leste** led by H.E. Vicente Guterres.
5. The **Guests of the Host** include H.E. Dr. AKP Mochtan Deputy Secretary of ASEAN Secretariat; German Delegation (Embassy of German, GIZ, HSF) led by Mr. Timo Goosmann; Georgia led by Ms Manana Kobakhidze; ASEAN Wildlife Enforcerment Network (ASEAN WEN) led by Mr. Faisal Hj Nordin; ASEAN Foundation represented by Ms. Elaine Lae Imm Tan and Freeland Foundation led by Mr. Brian Gonzales.

OPENING REMARKS

6. H.E. Tan Sri Datuk Seri Panglima Pandikar Amin Mulia, Speaker of The House of Representatives of Malaysia and President of AIPA, warmly welcomed the delegates to the Assembly. This was a historic occasion for Malaysia, as Chair of ASEAN, as well as the President of AIPA and the host for the 26th ASEAN Summit held earlier in the year. He reiterated the importance of ASEAN and AIPA as the executive and legislative branches of Southeast Asian nations. Parliament had been acknowledged as the central institution of democracy through which the will of the people was expressed. Democracy in its present form and definition in the eyes and in the mind of the West, if applied across the board failed to bring about the desired objective that was peace, harmony and prosperity.
7. The will of the people should form the basis of the Government. But evidently, he noted that there were countries in this world that were better off left alone governing their people in a non western democratic way of administration than a democratic system - that western countries practise - that was imposed upon their will.
8. H.E. Tan Sri Datuk Seri Panglima Pandikar Amin Mulia acknowledged that while ASEAN believed in democracy and separation of powers, ASEAN also believed that democracy should allow for close cooperation between the executive and legislative for the overall benefit of the ASEAN peoples. There was a symbiotic relationship between the two - the former formulated policies while the latter complemented and supported them.

For instance, in 1968 during a debate on the policy of defense a Malaysian Member of Parliament, the late Tun Dr. Ismail Abdul Rahman, raised the need for non-aggression treaties to be signed among Southeast Asian nations. That was the basis for the formation of ASEAN.

9. In the creation of the ASEAN Community by the end of 2015, he foresaw that AIPA would play a pivotal role as a strategic partner of ASEAN as reflected in the theme for the 36th General Assembly that focused on inclusiveness, where everyone would have access to and participate in programs designed for the benefits and well-being of the ASEAN community. The President of AIPA urged the Parliamentarians to do more to bridge the gap in international relations. He also reminded them that as far as AIPA and ASEAN were concerned, our system of government was democratic as enshrined in our respective constitution.

WELCOMING REMARKS

10. Honorable Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Bin Tun Abdul Razak, the Prime Minister of Malaysia cum Chairman of ASEAN, opened his keynote address with a page from history, highlighting that the last time the General Assembly was held here in Kuala Lumpur in 2007 the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Organization was transformed into the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly, or AIPA. This year Malaysia is chair of both ASEAN and AIPA, culminating in the establishment of an ASEAN Community.
11. Taking stock of the current socio-economic and political conditions in ASEAN, Prime Minister Najib was confident that ASEAN would continue to enjoy collective growth over the next decade with a youthful and increasingly well-educated population. For a sustainable future, the Prime Minister stressed on the importance to place the needs and the aspirations of the people first. Part of making ASEAN people-oriented, people-centered and inclusive was to make certain that protection of human rights and improvements in quality of life were extended to everyone, including the vulnerable and the marginalized, promoted gender equality and ensured justice and fairness for all. One of those rights was the right to clean air. In January 2015, Indonesia deposited the Instrument of Ratification of the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution with the ASEAN Secretary General. This was in line with the theme of the 36th General Assembly of AIPA, "Engaging A People-Oriented, People-Centred ASEAN Community towards Inclusiveness" was timely.
12. An ASEAN Community would promote inter-regional trade, movement of skilled labour, affordable regional air travel and enhanced export competitiveness. For a successful ASEAN integration, ASEAN Member States needed to be fully involved and engaged through the sharing of

best practices and initiatives. Various initiatives had been introduced including the ASEAN People's Award 2015 in recognition of ASEAN's most important asset, namely the people. In a people-oriented and people-centred ASEAN, members of Parliament needed to continue to strengthen their roots in our societies and to continue to build a symbiotic relationship between AIPA and ASEAN. As representatives of the people, parliamentarians could facilitate the creation of an ASEAN community that was politically cohesive, economically robust and socially responsible towards an ASEAN Century.

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

13. The Meeting of the Executive Committee of AIPA, chaired by His Excellency Tan Sri Datuk Seri Panglima Pandikar Amin Mulia, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Malaysia and President of AIPA discussed on the following matter:
 - Presented the Report of ASEAN-AIPA Interface at the 26th ASEAN Summit held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 26-27th April 2015 and the Report of the 7th AIPA Caucus held in Siem Reap, Cambodia from 26-30th July 2015 to be endorsed at the Committee on Political Matters, and the Report of the 12th AIPA Fact Finding Committee (AIFOCOM) to Combat the Drug Menace held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 7-11th June 2015 to be endorsed by the Committee on Social Matters;
 - Adopted the Programme of Activities, Draft Agenda Items for the 36th General Assembly, Topic for Dialogue with the AIPA Observer Parliaments, and the Setting up and Composition of Committees;
 - In considering the host for AIPA Caucus, LAO PDR agreed to host the 8th AIPA Caucus in 2016;
 - Given that there were no Member Parliament is able to host the 13th AIFOCOM, there would be no host for the 13th AIFOCOM in 2016;
 - In considering the Date and Venue of the 37th AIPA General Assembly, the Chair informed the Committee that Myanmar was unable to host the 37th AIPA General Assembly. In view that there was no host for the 37th AIPA General Assembly to be held in 2016, a draft resolution on the "Extension of Office of the President and the Chairman and Committee Members of the Executive Committee" should be referred to the Committee on Organisational Matters.

VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

14. As stipulated in article 8 of the Statutes, the Heads of delegations of other National Parliaments shall sit as Vice-Presidents. In the event that the President of the AIPA is unable to preside at the General Assembly for any reason whatsoever, one of the Vice-Presidents shall preside over the Assembly.

MESSAGES FROM HEADS OF STATE/GOVERNMENT

15. The 36th General Assembly of AIPA received the messages from the following Heads of State/Government: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

STATEMENTS OF HEADS OF DELEGATIONS

16. The Heads of the Delegations of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam delivered their respective statements during the First Plenary Session of the General Assembly. Singapore circulated written remarks from Madam Speaker Halimah Jacob in the absence of their parliamentary delegation due to the General Elections.

Brunei Darussalam

17. This year is of great significance to the people in the region as the vision of the ASEAN Community 2015 will be realised. The theme of this General Assembly "Engaging a People-Oriented, People-Centred ASEAN Community towards inclusiveness" is very much in-line with Malaysian Chairmanship theme of ASEAN this year: "Our People, Our Community, Our Vision".

In strengthening the ASEAN Community pillars in AIFOCOM, Brunei Darussalam express its supports to Thailand's proposal to enhance cooperation with the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters (AMMDM). Towards this end, it is urgent to operationalize the Technical Working Group that was formed three years ago. Further, AIPA could share the outcome of discussions at the AIPA Caucuses with the relevant ASEAN sectorial bodies as part of the contribution to the overall work in ASEAN based on the issues that are of mutual concern. The Meeting in Brunei last year focused on ensuring that citizens of ASEAN receive a high standard of education which enable them to seek opportunities not only in their own countries but also regionally and internationally.

This year the discussions in Cambodia centred on developing tourism while conserving natural heritage to further ASEAN's national economic

development. Therefore, AIPA and ASEAN must find a balance between the appreciation of local culture, customs and religious beliefs, as well as the conservation of its natural heritage towards continued prosperity and the betterment of the peoples' lives. It may be worth looking into providing substantive views and proposals to the leaders in advance so ASEAN-AIPA's discussions could be more focused.

Further, AIPA need to increase our confidence on its role as a credible partner of ASEAN during the interface with ASEAN leaders at their annual summits. This year ASEAN must target to achieve the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. We should also help ASEAN's people to understand ASEAN better, and explain to them the many opportunities Governments of ASEAN are creating through their works in ASEAN.

ASEAN will be celebrating its 50th Anniversary in a few years. It is therefore, more relevant than ever, that AIPA continue to perform its role to support its respective Government's work and to get the people aligned with the ASEAN Community Post- 2015 Vision.

Cambodia

18. Cambodia extended its warmest welcome to all delegates and distinguished guests and especially to all presidents/speakers of AIPA member parliaments and the ASEAN Secretariat for assigning their delegations to attend the 7th AIPA Caucus on the theme of "ASEAN Tourism: Promoting Nature Conservation and Developing Sustainable Tourism", held in Siem Reap, Kingdom of Cambodia from 26-30 July 2015. It was stated that the annual AIPA General Assembly created the opportunity for all AIPA parliamentary members and friends of AIPA to exchange views and experiences and to find common solutions to challenges.

Cambodia also emphasized the three pillars; namely the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC), the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC), the role of AIPA and the major challenge faced by our region.

He stressed that the ASEAN economic integration is an indispensable method for elevating the livelihoods of the people of ASEAN. That is aimed at forming a single-market base and widening production including revenue flows, resources, services, products and transnational skilled labour that can make the ASEAN economy become a global one. ASEAN will gain common benefits, allowing our people to gain common benefits together.

The other major challenge is to maintenance of peace and political stability in the region. If there is no peace and stability, development and prosperity will not exist. It is absolutely imperative that we work together to settle differences in a peaceful and non-violent manner. Call for a coordinated effort, international laws, bilateral or multilateral cooperation and negotiations, preventive diplomacy and effective conflict resolution mechanisms, based on mutual trust and understanding, and mutual interests, are the foundations for peace and prosperity for the region.

Cambodia stressed that strong cooperation between ASEAN and AIPA was the key towards the construction of an ASEAN community through legal support at the national level and regional harmonization of laws. It requires compliance with regional and international legal instruments, and respect for agreements and resolutions.

Indonesia

19. The Indonesian Parliament Head of Delegation, Hon. Mrs. Sarwo Budi Wiryanti Sukamdani, MP stated that Indonesia supports the 36th AIPA General Assembly theme of “People-centered and People-oriented ASEAN Community”. She then emphasized that ASEAN must respect and protect human rights, democracy, law enforcement, regional security and stability and prioritize poverty eradication as well as the need of an inclusive mechanism for ASEAN to bring together political differences, social transformation, and cultural diversities. On AEC, she highlighted that a constructive approach is required to accelerate the establishment of AEC, including promoting capacity building and transfer of technology in less developed countries as the key for narrowing socio-economic gaps. Domestic resources must be utilized to meet the demands of regional supply chain; and government should encourage innovation and creativity to increase competitiveness.

She also stressed that small and medium enterprises as the backbone of socio-economic stability and major source of revenues for the ASEAN Community must be developed. She then accentuated the need to complement the freer movement of people, goods and services with the efforts to maintain regional security and prevent trans-national crimes from being committed. Later, she suggested that AIPA must continuously promote harmonization of regulations and policies in the region as well as encourage inter-cultural and inter-faith dialogues by involving various stakeholders including the youth.

Finally, she concluded the country statement by reminding the floor of the importance of continuously raising public awareness and understanding on ASEAN. ASEAN governments and parliaments have to

work hand-in-hand in favour of the people in relation to the establishment of ASEAN Community.

Lao People's Democratic Republic

20. In statement by the Head of Delegation and the President of Lao PDR National Assembly, Hon. Pany Yathoutou, she emphasized some points in her speech. Firstly, she reminded the meeting about the achievement of ASEAN regarding the maintenance of peace, security, understanding and solidarity among nations as well as the maintenance of positive socio-economic development and strong growth in ASEAN Member States.

Secondly, she lauded the relevancy of the 36th AIPA General Assembly's theme "Engaging a People Oriented, People Centred ASEAN Community Toward Inclusiveness", that it is consistent with the prevailing trend of the current age where the people are considered an important driving force to support the ASEAN Community.

Malaysia

21. The statement of the Malaysian Head of Delegation was made by Hon. Datuk Seri Ronald Kiandee, the Deputy Speaker of the House of Representative of Malaysia. He firstly called for the propagation of the concept of "Engaging a People-oriented, People-centered ASEAN Community towards Inclusiveness" in the respective parliamentary constituencies and to bring them toward an inclusive community so they may work collectively and be tolerant of each other's culture, traditions and religion.

He then discussed some pertinent problems such as trafficking in persons and illegal migration and suggested that ASEAN member parliaments should further tighten the existing legislations in their respective countries and ensure strict enforcement of these legislations, while persuading their government to create more job opportunities and give equal job opportunities to the people. The enlargement of AIPA had brought about a larger community and hence there was a need for more legislative cooperation amongst AIPA members in adopting and implementing this year's theme of an inclusive community.

Finally, he concluded his statements by emphasizing the need for more legislative cooperation amongst AIPA members in adopting and implementing the theme of an inclusive ASEAN Community with strict adherence to the rule of law and a sense of justice in all areas of solemn undertaking.

Myanmar

22. The Myanmar Head of Delegation as well as the Deputy Speaker of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (Union Parliament), Hon. U Nanda Kyaw Swa, exhibited his support on the theme “Engaging a People-oriented, People-centered ASEAN Community towards Inclusiveness”. He emphasized that addressing developmental gaps (among AMS) is crucial for the successful building of the ASEAN Community.

The Myanmar Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (Union Parliament) has been cooperating with AIPA since it became a full member in 2011. He also observed the resolutions of WAIPA in strengthening women parliamentarians’ roles in ASEAN community building. Being one of the youngest legislatures in the world, the Hluttaw has actively been undergoing reforms, e.g., in the case of the Strategic Plan of Myanmar Hluttaw (2015-2018) and the Hluttaw Learning Center. While the Hluttaw attaches great importance for the Presidency of AIPA, it is not in a position to host the 37th AIPA General Assembly as the current term will expire at the end of January 2016 and the General Election is due in November 2015.

Philippines

23. In his statement, the Head of Delegation and Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives of the Republic of the Philippines, Hon. Al Francis C. Bichara began by reminding that, because the ASEAN Community underscores the need to strengthen a rules-based, integrated, peaceful and stable regional community, AIPA is responsible for promoting consistency and harmonizing domestic and regional rules and commitments to support and solidify the ASEAN Community. Secondly, the discussion is focused on the challenges of inclusive growth and he pointed out that although Southeast Asia is on track to achieve most of its millennium development targets, much still needs to be done to improve people’s welfare and social development.

Later, he contended that the lack of inclusiveness in ASEAN is shown in the stark divergence and development divide amongst ASEAN countries in terms of economic as well as social and human development standards and warned that these issues could threaten the cohesion and pose major risks to social stability. Thirdly, he called for socio-economic reforms in ASEAN in order to sustain the economic growth momentum in the region by giving example on the economic liberalisation in the Philippines, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia that have successfully attracted foreign direct investment, which in turn may alleviate poverty and unemployment in the country.

Fourthly, ASEAN failure to address labour migration adequately and the need to enhance social protection is discussed under the promotion of socio-economic development in ASEAN. Finally, he reminded that the ASEAN Political-Security Community has underscored the member states to live in peace at large in a just, democratic and harmonious environment based on shared norms and rules of good conduct in inter-state relations, effective conflict prevention and resolution mechanism and post-conflict peace building activities. Thus, he invited the members of AIPA to work towards the full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea in its entirety as well as the expeditious conclusion of a legally-binding Code of Conduct in the South China Sea.

Singapore

24. The Speaker of the Parliament of Singapore, Madam Halimah Yacob sent a written statement as Singapore was unable to participate in the 36th AIPA General Assembly due to the dissolution of Singapore Parliament and General Election on 11 September 2015. In her written remarks, she emphasized several points to continue deepening ASEAN cooperation and maintaining of ASEAN centrality in order to ensure peace, stability and sustained economic growth and development.

Firstly, she expressed her views that greater regional economic integration signified in the development of Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) would bring about greater market access to ASEAN, facilitate investments and trade flows and make ASEAN more competitive. Secondly, she emphasized the efforts toward narrowing the development gap to ensure that the benefits of greater ASEAN integration are fully shared. The initiative on ASEAN Connectivity was suggested to achieve this goal.

Thailand

25. Thailand underscores the advantage of the 36th AIPA General Assembly in providing a chance to enhance legislative partnership and advance regional integration to respond the future challenges that may affect the well-being of the ASEAN citizens. As per the theme of this year's General Assembly "Engaging a People-Oriented, People-Centred ASEAN Community towards Inclusiveness", AIPA embodies a regional legislative function which represents people's will for the better understanding and prosperity. Co-sharing the sense of ASEAN community building and bridging people's gap and fortune are also attached to AIPA's responsibilities throughout the works in all aspects.

However, there are some expectations from various perspectives that want to see AIPA stepping forward to stand as a regional legislative “institution” to perform its obligations in reinforcing legal cooperation and fast-track the already exist ASEAN agreements to be timely ratified and implemented accordingly. There are also a prerequisite for studying a common legislative framework and the needs to collect legal information of ASEAN countries.

Thailand also obliges itself to the aims of AIPA to attain the goals of the ASEAN Community by maintaining peace and stability and making this community to be prospered on rule-based principle. These desirable standards are also the pursuing goals of an on-going reforming course of Thailand. Involving all stakeholders to play a part in restructuring and restoring a strong established democratic society is the ultimate goal. It is positive that the upcoming election will be held no later than September 2016. As a result, it can be assured that Thailand strongly commits to this historic reform and willing to reinstate the

Viet Nam

26. In his speech at the First Plenary Session of the 36th AIPA General Assembly, H.E. Mr. Huynh Ngoc Son extended the warmest greetings and sincere appreciation to the General Assembly and his sincere gratitude to the Parliament of Malaysia and its people for their warm welcome and excellent arrangements accorded to the delegation.

Mr. Vice-President noted tremendous opportunities for cooperation and development, emphasizing that the diverse cooperation methods and linkages against the globalization background created new momentum for international relations. He also held that recent complex developments including the South China Sea have insisted on relevant stakeholders to work closely with each other in compliance with international law, peaceful dialogue and responsible actions.

The Vice-President emphasized that ASEAN was witnessing a historic milestone when the ASEAN Community was about to be formed later this year. Hence, a critical mission of each AIPA member was to constantly enhance cooperation and join efforts in urging ASEAN governments to complete the ASEAN Community building in all pillars, to strengthen solidarity and to outline a roadmap for a deeper ASEAN integration in the years to come. He noted with satisfaction great achievements made by ASEAN member countries in the maintenance of peace, stability, territorial integrity, social-economic development and international integration, calling upon AIPA and ASEAN members as well as relevant stakeholders to uphold unity, cooperation and the ASEAN centrality to

assist each other in developing a stronger ASEAN Community of peace, stability and prosperity.

Finally, he stressed that the National Assembly of Viet Nam should continue to be an active and responsible member of AIPA, making practical and effective contributions to the joint efforts to enhance the role of AIPA in further developing the ASEAN Community.

STATEMENTS OF THE HEADS OF DELEGATION OF OBSERVER PARLIAMENTS AND GUESTS OF THE HOST PARLIAMENT

Heads of Delegation of Observer Parliaments namely: Australia, Belarus, China, the European Parliament, India, Japan, New Zealand, Russian Federation and Timor Leste presented their statements at the 36th AIPA General Assembly.

H.E. Dr. AKP Mochtan, Deputy Secretary General of ASEAN, Guest of the Host, Parliament, delivered his remarks on behalf of Secretary General of ASEAN.

MEETING BETWEEN AIPA NATIONAL SECRETARIAT AND AIPA SECRETARIAT DURING AIPA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The meeting discussed amongst others the AIPA Capacity Development Project assisted by the Federal Government of Germany; communication and awareness and contribution from AIPA Member Parliaments for AIPA Secretariat.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS OF AIPA (WAIPA)

A. Resolution on Recognition of Post-2015 Development Agenda on Gender Equality

The WAIPA meeting encouraged AIPA Member Parliaments and ASEAN Member States to study a common stand pertaining to ASEAN gender equality in Sustainable Development Goals, and implored AIPA Member Parliaments and ASEAN Member States to strategize a common plan of action to ensure the implementation of SDGs to strengthen gender equality in ASEAN.

B. Resolution on Promoting a Culture of Respect and the Rights of Women and Girls towards Inclusiveness

The delegates of the WAIPA meeting unanimously recommended that ASEAN Member States and AIPA Member Parliaments ensure synergistic collaborations between AICHR, ACWC, the ASEAN Committee on the Implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers (ACMW), and other sectoral

bodies with one another as well as in tandem to advocate gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in all sectors of society.

The delegates of the WAIPA meeting emphasized the valuable role of men and boys of ASEAN in supporting, contributing and participating in gender equality, women empowerment efforts and the elimination of gender-based violence. The WAIPA meeting recommended AIPA Member Parliaments to strongly support the introduction of the Regional Plan of Action of Elimination on Violence against Women in line with CEDAW General Recommendation 19.

C. Resolution on Strengthening Legal Framework to Eliminate Violence against Women and Children in ASEAN

The WAIPA meeting called upon AIPA parliamentarians to play a significant role in strengthening legal frameworks to eliminate violence against women and children in ASEAN by increasing awareness on violence against women and children, especially in monitoring the implementation of policies and laws regarding the issue of violence against women and children.

The delegates of the WAIPA meeting unanimously called upon ASEAN Member States and AIPA Member Parliaments to continuously strengthen the existing national mechanisms; legislative, administrative and social measures using multi-sectoral approaches in order to develop legal frameworks to prevent violence against women and children; to protect the rights of victims/survivors of violence against women and children, to remedy the victims and survivors and to provide them support services including psycho-social and legal assistance; to prosecute and punish all acts of violence against women and children as well as to promote capacity building programmes for judiciary and law enforcement officers on gender sensitivity and prevention of violence against women and children

The meeting requested the AIPA Secretariat to monitor the implementation of this Resolution.

POLITICAL MATTERS

A. Adoption of the Report of the AIPA-ASEAN Interface at the 26th ASEAN Summit

The Report of the AIPA-ASEAN Interface at the 26th ASEAN Summit was unanimously adopted by all delegates.

B. Adoption of the Report of the 7th AIPA Caucus Meeting in Siem Reap, Cambodia

The Committee on Political Matters meeting unanimously adopted the Report of the 7th AIPA Caucus Meeting held in Siem Reap Cambodia and agreed to note the Draft Resolution on “ASEAN Tourism: Promoting Nature Conservation and Developing Sustainable Tourism”. The Caucus also urged the General Assembly to adopt its resolution which is “AIPA Member Parliaments to study cultural differences in ASEAN, provide cultural exchanges and educate citizens to appreciate the diversity in culture and especially those in the tourism industry”.

C. Resolution on Strengthening ASEAN Community through Good Governance toward Inclusiveness

The Committee on Political Matters agreed with the importance of ASEAN to strengthen ASEAN community through good governance and inclusiveness. The Committee further recalled Article 1 Clause 7 and Clause 13 of ASEAN Charter to strengthen democracy, enhancing good governance, rule of law, protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as recalled the process of ASEAN integration and community building. The committee reaffirmed the importance of implementing the Joint Declaration on the Attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in ASEAN and also the importance of ASEAN parliamentarians working together to strengthen ASEAN’s institutions in addressing regional challenges. Therefore, the resolution resolved to promote good governance and integrity by strengthening public institutions to enhance public delivery systems through dialogue and partnership with governments and all relevant stakeholders, including dialogue partners. The committee also resolved to address the serious increase of non-traditional security issues with ASEAN.

D. Resolution on Strengthening ASEAN Political Security Community towards Inclusiveness

The Committee on Political Matters recognized the continued regional peace and stability for ASEAN’s greater growth beyond 2015 in order to strengthen ASEAN political security towards inclusiveness while welcoming the progress made in the implementation of the Roadmap for ASEAN Community (2009-2015), the Committee underlined serious concerns over the violence and brutality committed by extremist organizations and radical groups. The Committee resolved to call all ASEAN Member States to effectively implement the ASEAN convention on counter terrorism, United Nations Security Council (UNSC) counter

terrorism related resolutions, and other relevant provisions of international laws. The committee urged AMS cooperation to counter the threats posed by terrorist/extremist organizations and radical groups as well as to maintain trust, peace and security.

Recalling the Joint Communiqué of the 48th ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting and reaffirming the importance of maintaining peace, security and freedom of navigation in and over-flight above the South China Sea, the Committee emphasized the need for all parties to ensure the full and effective implementation of the Declaration of Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DoC) in its entirety, and looked forward to the expeditious conclusion of an effective legally binding Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (CoC).

The committee also underlined the concern over the development in the South China Sea. That committee emphasized the importance of full and effective implementation of the DoC and early conclusion of the CoC.

ECONOMIC MATTERS

A. Resolution on Enhancing Inter-Regional Cooperation and Intra-Regional Integration in Trade and Industry

Noting the challenges faced collectively by the region as well as by individual ASEAN Member States, from problems with access to capital, lack of access to technology and markets, insufficient market knowledge and inadequate managerial skills and data for setting operating standards, there is the need to enhance inter-regional cooperation and intra-regional integration in trade and industry to promote access to regional and global markets. This resolution for inter-regional cooperation and intra-regional integration in trade and industry aims to strengthen the institutional basis of the global economy, in tandem with narrowing the development gaps among ASEAN member states (AMS) and different regions. This resolution is also cognizant of the constraints faced by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to gain access into intra and inter-regional markets.

B. Resolution on Narrowing Development Gaps Among ASEAN Member States

This resolution alludes to the Hanoi Plan of Action (HPA), and Initiatives for ASEAN Integration (IAI) for the narrowing of development gaps within and among AMS and the ASEAN Framework for Equitable Economic Development (AFEED). Such initiatives were formed as the income gap among ASEAN member states (AMS) have not been eliminated despite more than three decades of the formation of ASEAN. This resolution thus recommends country-specific programs and mechanisms to address

development needs and issues in AMS. Such mechanisms are among others, as focus on ASEAN financial institutions through the ASEAN Development Funds and the development of social entrepreneurship and social enterprises to implement narrowing gaps programs within ASEAN.

C. Promoting Parliaments' Role In Enhancing Implementation of ASEAN Economic Community Commitments Beyond 2015

The establishment of AEC at the end of 2015 is a historic milestone in regional economic integration towards a dynamic, open, stable and prosperous ASEAN. On the road towards deeper economic integration till the end of 2015 and beyond, AIPA Member Parliaments have been taking active role and will continue to be pivotal actors in enhancing implementation of AEC commitments. This Resolution is of paramount importance because it would significantly contribute to the consent among AIPA Member Parliaments, which in turns creates positive impact on ASEAN and AMS and supports the realization of AEC.

AIPA Member Parliaments determine to continue their support in the implementation and completion of pending action lines under AEC Blueprint 2015. AIPA urges for law harmonization, encourages AIPA Member Parliaments to allocate appropriate resources towards the implementation of AEC commitments beyond 2015 and calls on the implementation of AEC commitments in respective governments' socio-economic plans, programs and imperative national investment projects, especially the ones that will achieve ASEAN infrastructure connectivity. AIPA Member Parliaments are also strongly urged to further strengthen government agencies and reform administrative regulations towards better conformity and are recommended to support Governments in providing SMEs, especially micro-enterprises, with assistance policies to enhance competitiveness, and harness opportunities. AIPA Member Parliaments are recommended to promote greater public awareness and full understanding of AEC among agencies, organizations and constituents; to enhance communication, information and experience sharing via bilateral dialogues among AMS. In addition, AIPA calls on parliamentary oversight of the strict implementation of AEC commitments. AIPA resolves to periodically evaluate and review the outcomes of supporting the implementation of AEC commitments in line with AEC Vision 2025.

SOCIAL MATTERS

A. Resolution on Protecting the Rights of Older Persons and Enhancing Their Quality of Life

This resolution aims to address ASEAN's deep concern over the fast increasing number of older persons. In this respect various recommendations have been put forth to encourage active ageing. In essence, while acknowledging the contributions of older persons, it is imperative that they are protected and secure in terms of the provision for social integration, health and geriatric medical care, residence and nursing homes and other material needs for the maintenance of an acceptable quality of life and social development.

In this respect, Members of Parliament are urged to play their role to promote the exchange of good practices, experiences and information regarding legal measures and means to promote and protect the rights of older persons especially in the area of legal development and harmonization of laws. Members of Parliament are also urged to play the important role in defining and supervising the implementation of national goals through legislative and political means and at the national and regional parliamentary level so that these older person can enjoy an acceptable quality of life and social development.

B. Resolution on Enhancing ASEAN Higher Education towards an Inclusive ASEAN Community

The resolution aims to help hasten the solidarity and development of a regional identity so as to further strengthen the existing network of leading universities and institutions of higher learning in the region. By strengthening cooperation on education, ASEAN Member States hope to achieve an ASEAN Caring and Sharing Community. The ASEAN Credit Transfer System (ACTS) is aimed to enhance student mobility in the region. The Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) must be the master key that can alleviate poverty, promote peace, conserve environment, improve quality of life for all and help achieve sustainable development. There is a need to develop human resources through closer cooperation in education and lifelong learning as well as science and technology. It is also important to nurture and enhance the role of young people for the future challenges of ASEAN. Thus, Members of Parliament are called upon to share their best practices on higher education policies, curriculum, research and development, innovations and programs capable of enhancing higher education in their respective states.

There is a strong recommendation for the initiation of a common reference framework, the ASEAN Qualification Reference Framework (AQRF) and the ASEAN Quality Assurance Framework (AQAF) that enhance mobility of skilled labour through qualifications. They are also called upon to enhance cooperation in the area of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) aimed at ensuring skilled and competent workforce in line with labour demand. In addition, there is a need to strengthen the implementation of e-Learning activities through the ASEAN Cyber University aimed towards enhancing inclusiveness of ASEAN community.

C. Resolution on Technical Working Group (TWG) in Accordance to the Direction of the 35th AIPA General Assembly held in Vientiane, Lao PDR in 2014

The 12th AIFOCOM Meeting endorsed a new structure of the formation of the Technical Working Group (TWG). This structure was improvised and an interim structure was proposed during the meeting. The Committee agreed to adopt the interim structure unanimously.

D. Resolution on the Adoption of the Report of the 12th Meeting of the AIFOCOM to Combat the Drug Menace

The 12th AIFOCOM Meeting was held from 7 to 11 June 2015 in Le Meridien, Kuala Lumpur. The meeting concluded successfully with the final report being endorsed at the end of the 12th AIFOCOM Meeting. The report was passed for adoption during the Social Committee meeting at the 36th AIPA General Assembly.

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

The Organizational Committee Meeting considered and adopted 14 draft Resolutions, as follows:

- A. Resolution on the Amendments to the Statutes of AIPA;
- B. Resolution on the Amendments to the Staff Regulations of the AIPA Secretariat, Financial Regulations of the AIPA Secretariat, and Instruction Manual for Staff;
- C. Resolution on Financial Reports of the AIPA Secretariat;
- D. Resolution on Estimated Budget for the AIPA Secretariat;
- E. Resolution on an Annual Contribution to the AIPA Special Fund by AIPA Member Parliaments;
- F. Resolution on Payment of Gratuity to the family of the late Mr. Sudarsono (AIPA Security Officer);

- G. Resolution on Adoption of the Workplan 2015 of the AIPA Secretariat;
- H. Resolution on Proposed Relocation of the AIPA Secretariat;
- I. Resolution on Strengthening Law Enforcement and Regional Cooperation to Combat Wildlife Crime;
- J. Resolution on AIPA Publications;
- K. Resolution on the Continuation of Joint Program with FFI;
- L. Resolution on Extension of Office of the President and the Chairman and Committee Members of the Executive Committee;
- M. Resolution on Appreciating the Services of His Excellency Tan Sri Datuk Seri Panglima Pandikar Amin Mulia as President of 36th AIPA from September 2014 to September 2016;
- N. Resolution on Date and Venue of the 37th General Assembly.

There were fourteen resolutions brought before the Organizational Committee. Thirteen were fully approved and the Resolution under E was approved subject to the concurrence of each Member Parliament.. The resolution that was provisionally approved was Resolution on an Annual Contribution to the AIPA Special Fund by AIPA Member Parliaments. The committee decided that this resolution would only be accepted upon endorsement of the respective national parliaments. The resolution that was not approved in respect to the renaming of the “Statutes” to “Constitution”. The other amendment stands.

Based on the Resolution on Extension of Office of the President and the Chairman and Committee Members of the Executive Committee, the Committee approved the extension of the office of the President and the Chairman and the Committee Members of the Executive Committee.

DIALOGUES WITH OBSERVER COUNTRIES

The General Assembly, through its dialogue panels, conducted separate meetings with Observer Countries, namely: Australia, Belarus, China, European Parliament, India, Japan, New Zealand, Russian Federation and Timor Leste. The topic discussed with dialogue partner is “Enhancing Parliamentary Collaborations via People-Oriented, People-Centred Approach”.

37th AIPA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The 37th General Assembly would be determined by the Executive Committee at its meeting to be held no later than September 2016.

APPRECIATION TO THE HOST COUNTRY

The Delegations attending the General Assembly expressed their sincere appreciation to the Government and Parliament of Malaysia as well as the Malaysian people for their warm welcome, generous hospitality and the excellent arrangements for the 36th AIPA General Assembly.

APPRECIATION TO PRESIDENT OF THE ASEAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

The Delegations attending the General Assembly extended their sincere gratitude and appreciation to H.E. Tan Sri Datuk Seri Panglima Pandikar Amin bin Haji Mulia, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Malaysia for his able leadership in further strengthening AIPA and AIPA-ASEAN cooperation in the spirit of solidarity, friendship, cooperation and mutual understanding, thus contributing to the common cause of ASEAN Community Building by 2015.