

...And On to ASEAN 2025

ASEAN has just launched the ASEAN Community, but has already put in place the path to ensure that the momentum of the integration process continues over the next 10 years.

ASEAN Leaders declared the formal establishment of the ASEAN Community on 31 December 2015 at their 27th Summit in Kuala Lumpur in November. But they also put in place the next phase of its consolidation, further integration and stronger cohesiveness.

Through the ASEAN Leaders' Kuala Lumpur Declaration on ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together, ASEAN Member States resolved to implement their vision of ASEAN 2025 in a timely and effective manner to push forward their desire and collective will to live in a region of lasting peace, security and stability, sustained economic growth, shared prosperity and social progress, as well as promote ASEAN interests, ideals and aspirations.

The outcome of a year of planning and intense discussions, 'ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together' is a forward-looking roadmap that articulates their vision of ASEAN 10 years from now – one that is “politically cohesive, economically integrated, and socially responsible” and a consolidated community across its three pillars - political-security, economic and socio-cultural.

In sum, ASEAN 2025 reaffirms the commitment towards the continuation and consolidation of ASEAN Community-building.

ASEAN Leaders have adopted the specific Blueprints for ASEAN Community Vision 2025 in the three pillars. These have action lines/strategic measures that seek to complete, within a specific and limited timeframe, key measures. Community-building over the next decade will build on the experiences and expertise acquired in the preceding 10 years to tackle new challenges, harness new technologies and ensure opportunities for all.

Through the ASEAN Community building process, ASEAN demonstrates to its partners and the world that it is determined to maintain ASEAN's role in dealing with challenges that affect peace, security and stability in the region.

The broad goals of ASEAN 2025 include putting more emphasis on the peoples of ASEAN and their well-being; the increased awareness of ASEAN; more engagement with the peoples of ASEAN Member States; commitment to fundamental freedoms, human rights and better lives; strengthened capacity to deal with challenges while maintaining ASEAN centrality; remaining an outward-looking and global player; implementing the ASEAN agenda while pursuing national aspirations that contribute to ASEAN Community-building; and strengthening ASEAN organs and the ASEAN Secretariat.

ASEAN 2025 lays out a vision of an interlinked, thriving community not only for ASEAN peoples, but for ASEAN's partners.

For ASEAN peoples, ASEAN 2025 means that they will continue to live in a more united, secure, peaceful and cohesive region; enjoy the protection of

human rights and fundamental freedoms, be better prepared against pandemics and natural disasters, enjoy greater prosperity, and benefit from greater job opportunities and connectivity.

For ASEAN's partners, ASEAN 2025 means engaging with a Community that is committed to and has the capacity to contribute to a peaceful, secure and stable region; can respond effectively to existing and emerging challenges, and is committed to working with external partners to address issues ranging from drug-related crimes to trafficking in persons and people smuggling. Engaging with the ASEAN Community offers more economic, trade and investment opportunities and linkages with an ASEAN that has a greater role and voice in global economic fora and contributes to global economic governance.