

Program

*The 8th Asia Economic Forum*

*“ASEAN in the Evolving Regional Architecture:  
Opportunities, Challenges and Future Direction”*

*Hotel Sofitel Phnom Penh Phokeethra,  
Phnom Penh, 16-18 March 2012*

There is no doubt that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has made tremendous progress in all areas of cooperation in the last forty-five years. Since its inception in 1967, from the original five to ten member-states, ASEAN has grown from a humble beginning to a leader in the region, moving from a loosely connected regional body to a thriving institution that has, as its ethos, amity, cooperation, confidence- and consensus-building. Peace and development have been at the apex of its initial list of priorities. Today, ASEAN has gone from carefully signing political declarations to placing weight behind statements, agreements and treaties. The first commitment was the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia signed in 1976, followed by the ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (AFTA) sixteen years later, and on to making the region free of nuclear weapons through the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (SEANWFZ) as well as to a functioning legal framework with the ASEAN Charter, which was signed into force in 2007 and went into effect one year later. ASEAN has accelerated the pace of diplomatic prominence, the rise of its profile internationally, and continues to have a great impact on major power relations in the region and the wider world.

When it comes to ASEAN, there can also be no question about its growing influence, prominence, and leadership. Several points come to mind quickly, as follows:

**First, the East Asia Summit (EAS).** The EAS, which was established in 2005, is now perhaps the most important annual gathering of leaders in the Asia-Pacific region, which include all the ASEAN Member-States (Brunei Darussalam, Kingdom of Cambodia, Republic of Indonesia, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Republic of the Philippines, Republic of Singapore, Kingdom of Thailand, and Socialist Republic of Vietnam), China, Japan, Republic of Korea (ROK), India, Australia, New Zealand, the United States of

America, and the Russian Federation. The leaders of these eighteen countries meet annually to discuss a wide of key strategic issues and challenges affecting the region, including the key priority areas of cooperation, namely finance, education, environment, energy, disaster management, and avian flu. Of course, there are other important issues which the EAS has been and will continue deliberating on, such as economics, maritime security, and transnational crimes. The key questions to ponder are: “How will the EAS continue to evolve in the current political and security environment?,” “Will ASEAN continue to remain in the driver’s seat or maintain its centrality?,” and “What role will the major powers (the US, China, Russia, India and Japan) play in the EAS framework?”

**Second, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).** Established in 1994, the ARF has been thought as the only political and security dialogue in the Asia-Pacific region. With twenty-seven participating members (ten ASEAN Member-States, plus China, Japan, Republic of Korea, India, Australia, New Zealand, United States of America, Russian Federation, Canada, the European Union, Pakistan, Mongolia, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Timore Leste, Papua New Guinea), the ARF, which meets annually in July, has been in existence for seventeen years, and has been focusing its priorities on building confidence and trust among its member-states in the region, as well as promoting preventive diplomacy. Given its strength of promoting a culture and/or habit of dialogue and consultations among its members through the holding of many meetings and negotiations, the ARF has been instrumental in the maintenance of peace, security and stability in the region, as well as in the promotion of cooperation on a wide range of political and security matters, including traditional and nontraditional security issues confronting the region. The important questions to consider are: “How will the ARF continue to evolve in the current environment?,” “Will ASEAN continue to play a central role in the ARF?,” “What kind of role will other key participating members play in the ARF?,” and “What kind of challenges that the ARF will continue to be confronted with?”

**Third, the ASEAN Defense Ministers’ Meeting Plus (ADMM Plus).** The ADMM Plus, which was established in 2010, is a landmark defense and security cooperation mechanism in the region. With eighteen member-states (ten ASEAN Member-States, plus China, Japan, Republic of Korea, India, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Russian Federation), the ADMM Plus, which is in the early stage of its development, will have a strategic role to play in the current state of defense and security cooperation among the countries involved. This is important in the context of building confidence and promoting mutual trust as well as to foster transparency and information-sharing as well as the sharing of experience and best practices in the defense sector. The inaugural meeting of the ADMM Plus was convened in Hanoi, in October 2010, and Brunei Darussalam is expected to host the second meeting of

the ADMM Plus next year. While the decision of the ADMM Plus in 2010 was to convene this meeting triennially, there is now an emerging consensus to have the ADMM Plus convene every two years in order to keep pace with the changing security situation as well as the defense outlook in the region and in the wider world. The important questions to think about are: “How will the ADMM Plus continue to evolve in the future?,” “Will ASEAN be able to maintain its centrality in the ADMM Plus framework?,” and “Will the ADMM Plus continue to make a positive contribution to regional peace, stability and security by avoiding future arms race in the region?”

**Fourth, the building of the ASEAN Economic Community and the strengthening of ASEAN’s economic cooperation with its Dialogue Partners through the free trade arrangements (FTAs).** ASEAN has set in motion its goal of building the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), with single market and production base, by 2015, which is not in the far-too-distance future. At the same time, ASEAN has been working closely with its Dialogue Partners and other regional groupings in order to build the FTAs to boost trade, investment, tourism, among others, as well as to develop its economies. Through a wide range of bold initiatives, from FTAs with Dialogue Partners (such as China, Japan, Republic of Korea and India) to the building of the ASEAN Connectivity within the region as well as with its Dialogue Partners, from enhancing its integration to the building of promotion centers in Japan, Korea and China to foster trade, investment and tourism, ASEAN has been very active by undertaking various activities and projects. The key questions to think about are: “Will ASEAN succeed in building its economic community by 2015?,” “Will ASEAN be able to realize all FTAs that it has with its Dialogue Partners in order to promote its economic development and integration?,” and “How will ASEAN move forward on its economic agenda?”

While the 8<sup>th</sup> AEF will attempt to address those questions above, it will also deliberate on a number of other relevant issues which are of great interest and concern to ASEAN, both collectively and individually, as well as to its Dialogue Partners. The objective of this year’s AEF is to have all of those issues being discussed in-depth and comprehensively in the different plenary sessions of the two-day conference.

ASEAN has undoubtedly come a long way in 45 years of its establishment. It has certainly achieved many significant milestones, but it was not without a challenge. The present and future challenges will surely require ASEAN’s collective strength, wisdom, unity, solidarity and shared vision.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Asia Economic Forum (AEF) will take up “*ASEAN in the Evolving Regional Architecture: Achievements, Challenges and Future Direction*” as the theme for this

year because of Cambodia's Chairmanship of ASEAN. Therefore, the AEF will give its priority to the deliberations and exchange of views on a myriad of relevant issues related to ASEAN for the benefits of everyone who has a strong and keen interest in the future of ASEAN.

The 8<sup>th</sup> AEF, "ASEAN in the Evolving Regional Architecture: Opportunities, Challenges, and Future Direction," aims to achieve the following:

1. Examine how ASEAN has been able to develop and transform itself in the past 45 years of its existence to be where it is today.
2. Review and analyze ASEAN's achievements, opportunities and challenges, and look at the countdown to 2015 for ASEAN to realize its community building.
3. Deliberate on how ASEAN can strategically best engage its Dialogue Partners in the coming years, and at the same time to play a positive role in its relations with the Major Powers in the region.
4. Look at ways to enhance ASEAN Centrality in the evolving regional architecture.
5. Identify ASEAN's future priorities and challenges.

To this end, the 8<sup>th</sup> AEF explores seven major areas in depth:

Plenary Session I:	<i>ASEAN After 45 Years: A Review of Achievements and Challenges</i>
Plenary Session II:	<i>ASEAN Community Building: the Countdown to 2015</i>
Plenary Session III:	<i>ASEAN and the Major Power Relations</i>
Plenary Session IV:	<i>The Voice of ASEAN Youth: ASEAN's Priorities and Challenges</i>
Plenary Session V:	<i>ASEAN and the Dialogue Partners: From Strength to Strength</i>
Plenary Session VI:	<i>ASEAN and the Evolving Regional Architecture</i>
Plenary Session VII:	<i>The Future of ASEAN: Opportunities and Challenges</i>

Annotated Program

**THE 8<sup>th</sup> ASIA ECONOMIC FORUM**

*“ASEAN in the Evolving Regional Architecture:  
Opportunities, Challenges and Future Direction”*

*Hotel Sofitel Phnom Penh Phokeethra,  
Phnom Penh, Kingdom of Cambodia,  
16-18 March 2012*

**FRIDAY, 16 MARCH 2012**

All day      Arrival of participants

19:30      **Reception in Honor of Invited Participants and Speakers**  
Hosted by **Dr. Haruhisa Handa**, *Advisor to the Prime Minister of the  
Kingdom of Cambodia; President and Founder, International  
Foundation for Arts and Culture; Founder and Chairman, Asia  
Economic Forum; Chancellor, The University of Cambodia*

Venue: Raffles Hotel Le Royal

Attendance: All AEF Speakers and Chairs; Invited Guests

Attire: Smart Casual

**SATURDAY, 17 MARCH 2012**

07:30-08:30 **Registration**

08:45      Arrival of **H.E. Keat Chhon**, *Deputy Prime Minister of Economy and  
Finance, High Representative of Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei  
Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia*

09:00-10:00 **Opening Session**

**National Anthem**

Welcome Remarks by **Dr. Kao Kim Hourn**, *Advisor to the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia; Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation; Vice Chairman of AEF; President, The University of Cambodia*

Opening Remarks by **Dr. Haruhisa Handa**, *Advisor to the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia; President and Founder, International Foundation for Arts and Culture; Founder and Chairman, Asia Economic Forum; Chancellor, The University of Cambodia*

Keynote Address: “The Future of ASEAN: Priorities and Challenges” by **H.E. Keat Chhon**, *Deputy Prime Minister of Economy and Finance, High Representative of Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia*

10:00-10:15 Coffee Break

10:15-12:00 **Plenary Session I: ASEAN After 45 Years: A Review of Achievements and Challenges**

*In 45 years, which major milestones has ASEAN achieved? Which challenges were confronted, and which ones remain, chiefly in shifting toward economic, political, and socio-cultural regionalism? Where is ASEAN headed, and, given certain realities, how much can ASEAN expect to contribute to the so-called Asian Century by 2050?*

Chair: **Dr. Haruhisa Handa**, *Advisor to the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia; President and Founder, International Foundation for Arts and Culture; Founder and Chairman, Asia Economic Forum; Chancellor, The University of Cambodia*

Speakers: **H.E. Dr. Hang Chuon Naron**, *Secretary of State, Ministry of Economy and Finance; Vice-Chairman, Supreme National Economic Council, Phnom Penh*

*Professor Din Merican, Adjunct Professor, The University of Cambodia, based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia*

Questions & Answers

12:00-13:30 Lunch

13:30-15:00 Plenary Session II: ASEAN Community Building: the Countdown to 2015

*What are key issues of establishing a regional ASEAN integration? How much progress has ASEAN achieved, and how much work lies ahead, in building a community by 2015? What can ASEAN Member-States do, perhaps better, to accelerate the pace of building a regional community and narrow the development gaps? What have been the main challenges and opportunities for ASEAN in concretizing clear goals set for 2015? What more can ASEAN, both collectively and individually, do to make ASEAN more united, stronger, and more influent*

Chair: Associate Professor Katherine Marshall, *Visiting Associate Professor, Georgetown University School of Foreign Service; Distinguished Visiting Professor, University of Cambodia; Former Counselor, The World Bank, Washington DC, USA*

Speakers: Mr. M. Rajaretnam, *Special Adviser, Secretary-General of ASEAN, Jakarta*

Dr. Peter John Brimble, *Deputy Country Director, Senior Country Economist, Cambodia Resident Mission, Asian Development Bank (ADB), Phnom Penh*

H.E. Dr. Pich Rithi, *Senior Economic Official (Cambodia's SEOM Leader), Ministry of Commerce, Phnom Penh*

Questions & Answers

15:00-15:15 Coffee Break

15:15-17:00 **Plenary Session III: ASEAN and Major Power Relations**

*How constructive has ASEAN been engaging with the Major Powers (such as the US, China, Russian Federation, India and Japan) in the region? What impact do Major Power Relations have on ASEAN, both positively and negatively? What should be a more appropriate role for ASEAN to strategically deal with the Major Powers? This session will review the state of Major Power Relations in the region at present and how ASEAN will continue to engage with the Major Powers, both individually and collectively, in the future?*

Chair: **Ambassador Ong Keng Yong**, Singapore's High Commissioner to Malaysia and Former Secretary-General of ASEAN

Speakers: **Ambassador Pou Sothirak**, *Former Minister of Industry, Mines and Energy of Cambodia; Visiting Senior Research Fellow, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS), Singapore; Former Cambodia's Ambassador to Japan*

**Professor Simon Tay**, *Chairman, Singapore Institute of International Affairs (SIIA), Singapore*

Questions & Answers

19:15 Dinner Reception, Hosted by **Dr. Haruhisa Handa**, *Advisor to the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia; President and Founder, International Foundation for Arts and Culture; Founder and Chairman, Asia Economic Forum; Chancellor, The University of Cambodia*

Venue: Hotel Sofitel Phnom Penh Phokeethra

Attendance: All AEF Speakers and Chairs; Invited Guests

Attire: Formal



SUNDAY, 18 MARCH 2012

08:00-09:30 **Plenary Session IV: *The Voice of ASEAN Youth: ASEAN's Priorities and Challenges***

*For some time now, ASEAN has given its clear commitment and important priority to the role of youth in the development of ASEAN. Each year, the ASEAN Leaders meet with the ASEAN youth representatives to listen and dialogue with them on a wide range of issues which are relevant and of concern to ASEAN. The voice of the future is important for the region, and accordingly this session will hear the exchange of views by ASEAN youth leaders on what they consider the priorities and challenges for ASEAN at present and in the future.*

Chair: **Rev. Dr. Pradit Takerngrangsarit**, *President, Payap University, Chiang Mai, Thailand*

Speakers: **Dr. Sothea Oum**, *Associate Researcher, Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), Jakarta, Indonesia*

**Mr. Kimlong Chheng**, *Economic/Commercial Specialist, Embassy of the United States of America, Phnom Penh*

**Mr. Nguyen Duc Tuyen**, *Research Fellow, Institute for Foreign Policy and Strategic Studies, Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam, Hanoi, Vietnam*

**Miss. Vong Socheata**, *Democracy and Governance Specialist, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Phnom Penh*

Questions & Answers

09:00-09:15 Coffee Break

09:15-12:00 **Plenary Session V: *ASEAN and the Dialogue Partners: From Strength to Strength***

*For almost four decades, ASEAN has been actively working closely with its Dialogue Partners (Japan, China, Republic of Korea, Australia, USA, India, New Zealand, Canada, the European Union, and the Russian Federation) through various areas of cooperation, programs and projects to mutually benefit both sides. How can ASEAN further deepen and expand its current state of cooperation and partnership with each of its Dialogue Partners in the most constructive manner? How can ASEAN maintain and rejuvenate its dialogue relationship as well as its proactive engagement with the Dialogue Partners in order to encourage them to positively support the ASEAN Community building, ASEAN integration and ASEAN Connectivity. What more can ASEAN do, both collectively and individually, to raise the profile of ASEAN's partnership and cooperation with each of its Dialogue Partners?*

Chair: **H.E. Dr. Sok Siphana**, *Chair, Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI) Board of Directors; Advisor to the Royal Government of Cambodia, Phnom Penh*

Speakers: **H.E. Bagas Hapsoro**, *Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN, The ASEAN Secretariat, Jakarta, Indonesia*

**Dr. Thein Swe**, *Professor of Economics, International Finance and Globalization, Payap University; Former Principal Portfolio Management Specialist, Asia Development Bank, Chiang Mai, Thailand*

**Dr. Chheang Vanarith**, *Executive Director, Cambodian Institute for Cooperation and Peace (CICP), Phnom Penh*

Questions & Answers

12:00-13:30 Lunch

13:30-15:00 **Plenary Session VI: *ASEAN and the Evolving Regional Architecture***

*In recent years, both ASEAN and the region have been evolving considerably in terms of political, economic, security and strategic transformation. With the establishment of the East Asia Summit (EAS) and the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) Plus, and with the deepening of the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) Cooperation as well as the development of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN has been strategically repositioning and strengthening its role in the region on the one hand, and has "opened the door" to some extent with the Dialogue Partners to engage with ASEAN in those important frameworks. Will ASEAN be able to maintain its centrality in ASEAN as well as in the APT Cooperation, ARF, EAS, and the ADMM Plus? How will ASEAN continue to position itself in the evolving regional architecture in order to advance its overall strategic interests?*

Chair: **Dr. Kao Kim Hourn**, *Advisor to the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia; Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation; Vice Chairman of AEF; President, The University of Cambodia*

Speakers: **Ambassador Ong Keng Yong**, *Singapore's High Commissioner to Malaysia and Former Secretary-General of ASEAN*

**Dr. Paul Chambers**, *Director of Research, South East Asian Institute of Global Studies, Thailand*

**H.E. Premjith Sadasivan**, *Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Embassy of the Republic of Singapore, Phnom Penh*

**Mr. Dave Gordge**, *First Secretary and Deputy Head of Mission, Australian Embassy, Phnom Penh, Cambodia*

Questions & Answers

15:00-15:15 Coffee Break

15:15-16:45 **Plenary Session VII: *The Future of ASEAN: Opportunities and Challenges***

*After four and a half decades of development and transformation,*

*what will the future have in store for ASEAN? Will ASEAN become stronger politically, more developed economically, and more integrated socially? What challenges will ASEAN be confronted with, both internally and externally, in the new decade ahead? What will be ASEAN's key priorities in the next five years? This session will discuss the future of ASEAN in terms of its vision, commitment, priorities, and challenges.*

Chair: Prof. Lord George Carey, *Former Archbishop of Canterbury, London, United Kingdom*

Speakers: Sir Tim Lankester, *President, Corpus Christi College, United Kingdom*

Dr. Jayant Menon, *Lead Economist (Trade and Regional Cooperation), Office of Regional Economic Integration, Asian Development Bank, Manila, the Philippines*

Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, *Advisor to the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia; Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation; Vice Chairman of AEF; President, The University of Cambodia*

Questions and Answers

16:45-17:15 **Closing Session**

Summary of the 8<sup>th</sup> AEF by Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, *Advisor to the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia; Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation; Vice Chairman of AEF; President, The University of Cambodia*

Closing Remarks by Dr. Haruhisa Handa, *Advisor to the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia; Founder and Chairman, Asia Economic Forum; Chancellor, The University of Cambodia; President and Founder, International Foundation for Arts and Culture*

**MONDAY, 19 MARCH 2012**

- Departure of international participants

