



**AIPA MESSAGE**

**Delivered by H.E. Pantaleon D. Alvarez,  
President of AIPA and Head of the AIPA Delegation,  
Speaker of the House of Representatives, Congress of the Philippines  
Meeting between ASEAN Heads of States/Governments and  
AIPA Representatives on the 30<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit  
Manila, Philippines, April 29, 2017**

**Excellency Rodrigo Roa Duterte, Chairman of the 30<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit  
and President of the Republic of the Philippines;**

**Excellencies, Heads of States and Heads of Governments of ASEAN  
Member States, and Secretary General of ASEAN;**

**Honourable Fellow Speakers, Deputy Speakers, Heads of Delegation and  
Parliamentarians of AIPA Member Parliaments and Secretary General of  
AIPA;**

**Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. On behalf of the AIPA Delegation, allow me to convey our deep appreciation to His Excellency President Rodrigo Roa Duterte for the invitation

extended to AIPA to participate in the 30<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in the City of Manila.

2. We proudly recognize the chairmanship of the Philippines of ASEAN under the theme “**Partnering for Change, Engaging the World**”, as it celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. We also are pleased to note that AIPA marks its 40 years of bringing ASEAN closer to the people. On the third ASEAN Parliamentarian Meeting held here in Manila on September 1977, ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Organization (or AIPO) was formally launched which later evolved to AIPA in 2007.

3. We express our support to the Philippine’s core message for positive changes in the community and ASEAN unity, along with the realization of its six thematic priorities, namely: i) people-oriented and people-centred ASEAN; ii) peace and stability in the region; iii) maritime security and cooperation; iv) inclusive and innovation-led growth; v) ASEAN’s resilience; and, vi) ASEAN as a model of regionalism and a global player.

4. Since its founding on 8 August 1967, ASEAN has transformed from a loose grouping of five countries in Southeast Asia to a strong, forward-looking organization that has fostered cooperation, and maintained and promoted peace and security in the region.

5. While the Member States are different in many ways—politically, culturally, and demographically—ASEAN has thrived as a regional grouping and has harnessed the diversity of the region for the common good and regional prosperity. In November 2015, ASEAN proclaimed itself a politically cohesive, economically integrated and socially responsible Community during its 27<sup>th</sup> Summit - a key milestone in the history of ASEAN.

6. Today, all ten ASEAN Member States boast a combined GDP of about US\$2.5 trillion, the third largest economy in Asia and the seventh largest in the world. With its robust and resilient economy, ASEAN is projected to move up to be the fourth largest economy in the world by 2030.

7. The ASEAN Community Vision 2025 will guide the region over the next ten years in taking a more pro-active leadership role in strengthening regional security and in aligning economic policies, which would allow all Member States to reap the benefits of regional integration.

### *AIPA Perspectives on ASEAN Community Pillars*

8. AIPA reaffirms its support and commitment to the achievement of ASEAN Community Vision 2025. We have intensified our work towards fully harmonizing the laws of the Member States and building common standards of conduct consistent with ASEAN agreements and commitments.

9. AIPA recognizes that ASEAN is as crucial as other international bodies for regional and international cooperation. AIPA and ASEAN shall protect and preserve its own cultures, traditions and laws. The voices of Member States with more than 600 million people in the region speaking as one have a more effective voice that cannot be ignored. Our distinct cultures are anchored on shared origins and an intertwined history of trade, colonialism, and rise to self-determination, that fundamentally make us all part of the ASEAN family. As kin, we ought to look out for each other and, with the collective gains of our ASEAN brothers and sisters, build a future that is worthy of our shared history. It's about time we build and focus on our region. Being a community with one

voice, ASEAN can spread its norms of consensus politics and trust-building diplomacy within and outside the region.

10. We resolve to make AIPA an effective vehicle to promote and maintain peace and stability in the region. We will work closer with the respective legislatures of the ASEAN Member States to elicit greater participation of the people in implementing ASEAN initiatives and programs.

11. AIPA reaffirms its support for the **ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint** to provide a solid foundation for regional dialogue. We underscore the importance of strengthening ASEAN Centrality and Unity in the evolving regional architecture and in our engagement with Dialogue Partners. ASEAN's aspiration to play a central role in these engagement processes is reflected in [Article 41, paragraph 3 of the ASEAN Charter, which states: "ASEAN shall be the primary driving force in regional arrangements that it initiates and maintain its centrality in regional cooperation and community-building."

12. Multi-faceted security challenges such as terrorism, migration and humanitarian crises, among others, remain as major regional concerns. We cannot underscore enough the need for a culture of peace, respect and dialogue to bridge differences, diffuse tension and counter extremism. ASEAN must strengthen its cohesiveness to build a more democratic, rules-based and inclusive community that shares the values of tolerance and moderation.

13. As the globalization process deepens, we recognize the path to greater prosperity in the region is increased regional cooperation and interdependence. At the same time, we are also aware that mutual respect for independence,

sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of ASEAN Member States, has fostered a positive environment for ASEAN Community Vision 2025.

14. The Joint Statement of the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN Member States and China on the Full and Effective Implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea adopted at the ASEAN-China Ministerial Meeting in Vientiane, Laos last July 2016, reaffirmed the commitment of all the parties to the “full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, and to the freedom of navigation in and over-flight above the South China Sea”. We therefore urge ASEAN to ensure that these commitments are met, including the completion of a framework of the Code of Conduct by mid-2017.

15. AIPA underscores the importance of maintaining the South China Sea as a sea of peace, prosperity and cooperation. We support the solution of territorial and jurisdictional disputes by peaceful means and to exercise self-restraint in accordance with universally recognized principles of international law, including the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (or UNCLOS).

16. AIPA also recognizes the importance of maritime security, and calls for cooperation and constructive dialogues on maritime issues of common interest and concern including crimes at sea, search and rescue, maritime scientific research and unreported and unregulated fishing.

17. We reaffirm ASEAN’s resolve against drug abuse and its commitment towards a drug-free region. To combat the continuing challenges of illicit drug production, misuse and trafficking, we urge ASEAN to fully and effectively

implement the ASEAN Work Plan on Securing Communities against Illicit Drugs 2016–2025.

18. We celebrate the significant progress made by the **ASEAN Economic Community**, which is moving the region towards a more open market. Towards this end, ASEAN must strengthen the single market integration process and complete the creation of a tariff-free zone for ASEAN products. We recognize that physical, institutional and interpersonal connectivity is an important cog in ASEAN’s strategy to enhance its competitiveness. For this, we hope to promote private-sector participation and contribution to the massive infrastructure financing requirements of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025.

19. While the ASEAN Economic Community has made significant strides, social injustices such as poverty and inequality persist. We call on ASEAN to take more pro-active measures to promote inclusive growth and to reduce social disparities and narrow development gaps within and outside the region. The ASEAN Community Vision 2025 lays the roadmap for an ASEAN economic region that can be competitive in the global economy, and offer the ASEAN people economic opportunities for regional integration.

20. Under the ASEAN Economic Blueprint 2025, micro, small and medium enterprises (or MSMEs) will be the key drivers of economic growth in the region. AIPA and ASEAN must enhance their cooperation in this area to promote entrepreneurship and human capital development to seamlessly integrate MSMEs to the ASEAN Economic Community.

21. We recognize that regional integration is not without its risks. Widening development gaps if left unresolved, can undermine regional cooperation.

AIPA reaffirms its support for the timely and effective implementation of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration Work Plan III to narrow the socio-economic inequities in the region.

22. The **ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint** stresses the realization of a people-oriented, people-centred, and socially responsible ASEAN Community, including the ASEAN Women Work Plan 2016-2020. To achieve this, human resource development must be strengthened to promote access to skills development, and lifelong learning. Specifically, technical and vocational education and training can promote the development of skilled and trained labour in the region. Ultimately, we must bring the people back to the heart of regional community building, and to put a human face to our regional integration efforts.

23. AIPA urges ASEAN Member States to actively implement the contents of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals. AIPA requests ASEAN to strengthen cooperation in ensuring water security for the people's interest and sustainable development in the region.

24. One of the biggest marginalized sectors in ASEAN is our migrant workers who have contributed to the economic gains we see today. Migrant workers from ASEAN were about 14 million in 2014 which accounted for 6% of the global total. They sent almost \$50 billion in remittances to the whole region, making overseas employment among the most important sources of export earnings.

25. ASEAN and AIPA therefore should work closely on the following agenda: i) creating policy and legal framework to promote the rights of migrant workers, eliminating all kinds of abuse and discrimination in the workplace; ii)

facilitating access to information, training and education, justice, and social welfare services; iii) promoting fair and appropriate employment protection, payment of wages and adequate access to decent working and living conditions; and, iv) facilitating the exercise of consular functions or diplomatic authorities of States of origin when a migrant worker is arrested or detained in any other manner, under the laws and regulations of the receiving State and in accordance with the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations. We look forward to the finalisation of an ASEAN instrument on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers.

26. We also welcome the ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN, One Response: ASEAN Responding to Disasters as One in the Region and Outside the Region, signed by the ASEAN Leaders at the 28<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in Vientiane, Lao PDR in 2016, which underscores the commitment of ASEAN to respond to disasters within and outside the region in a unified and integrated manner.

### ***Post-2017 Vision***

27. While progress has been achieved in many fronts, ASEAN faces many challenges beyond 2017. As a region, we must build on our gains and comply with our commitments under the three Community pillars.

28. ASEAN has to deal with the constantly evolving geo-political and geo-economic landscape, which has implications on the peace, security and stability of the region. AIPA firmly supports regional efforts that will ensure a united and collective strategic response to these emerging challenges.

29. AIPA urges ASEAN to strengthen and continue the ASEAN vision beyond 2017. From a parliamentary perspective, legislative support remains crucial to the implementation of ASEAN agreements and commitments. As such, AIPA pledges its commitment to continuously support the enhancement of ASEAN-AIPA cooperation at operational level.

### ***Looking Forward***

30. AIPA extends its full support to the Philippines, as chair of ASEAN in its 50<sup>th</sup> year and at the helm of setting ASEAN's direction for the next 50 years, leading ASEAN towards the realization of the collective aspirations of its peoples for a peaceful, progressive, and caring community.

31. Allow me to express our highest gratitude to President Rodrigo Roa Duterte for the kind and warm hospitality extended to AIPA and its honourable delegates here this afternoon.

32. We wish you a successful and productive Summit and, above all, a peaceful, stable and prosperous ASEAN!

Thank you and Mabuhay!