TERMS OF REFERENCE
ASEAN SENIOR OFFICIALS MEETING ON YOUTH
(SOMY)

A. Background

1. The Declaration of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth that was adopted on 8 August 1992 in Jakarta, Indonesia marks the establishment of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth (AMMY). It envisioned a firm foundation for common action to promote ASEAN Youth Cooperation to enhance ASEAN awareness and perceptions of equality and partnership and thereby contribute towards peace, progress and prosperity in the region. The Second ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth (AMMY II) adopted the Kuala Lumpur Agenda on Youth Development on 17 November 1997.

2. The operationalisation of ASEAN cooperation on youth by the AMMY as guided by the Kuala Lumpur Agenda was first undertaken through the ASEAN Sub-Committee on Youth (ASY). The ASY was transformed into the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Youth (SOMY) at the First ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Youth (SOMY-I) held in Jakarta, Indonesia on 18-20 June 2002.

3. The ASEAN Community Vision 2025 adopted by the ASEAN Leaders at the 27th ASEAN Summit on 22 November 2015 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia envisions “an ASEAN empowered with capabilities to seize opportunities and address challenges in the coming decade” through the work of its three community pillars: (i) ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC); (ii) ASEAN Economic Community (AEC); and (iii) ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC).

4. In efforts towards realising this vision and in line with the principles and purposes of the ASEAN Charter, the ASCC strategised to open up a world of opportunities by preparing the peoples of ASEAN to deal with existing, emerging and future challenges and opportunities – through cooperation in the areas of human and sustainable development, including youth development.

5. With a view of establishing a solid reference for evidence-based policy making in youth development, ASEAN launched its First Youth Development Index in 2017. Indicators measured under the ASEAN YDI are divided into five (5) domains, namely: (i) Education; (ii) Health and Wellbeing; (iii) Employment and Opportunity; (iv) Participation and Engagement; and (v) ASEAN Awareness, Values and Identity.
6. The Terms of Reference (TOR) of the SOMY was first adopted on 19 June 2002. This ToR was adopted by the AMMY XI on 19 July 2019 in Vientiane, Lao PDR.

B. Mission

7. The SOMY shall serve as a forum for the exchange of views on strategic and emerging issues affecting policies on youth development in the region. The SOMY will continue working towards realising the objectives of Youth Policy as stipulated in the Kuala Lumpur Agenda on Youth Development, ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the ASCC Blueprint 2025, in line with the principles and purposes of the ASEAN Charter.

8. The SOMY will as necessary work with relevant sectoral bodies on the following youth development activities:\1:

a. Ensuring that accessible and quality education is provided
b. Enhancing health and well being
c. Providing opportunities to enhance employment and entrepreneurship,
d. Increasing participation and engagement of the youth in policy discourses to ensure their readiness for the future; and
e. Inculcating ASEAN awareness, values and identity as part of ASEAN Community building.

C. Mandates

9. Guided by the above objective and strategies, the mandate of the SOMY shall include the following:

a. To serve as a forum for the exchange of views on strategic and emerging issues affecting policies on youth development in the region;

b. To align regional development strategies and measures with directives emanating from the ASEAN Summits and other Ministerial Meetings, strategic measures of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Blueprint and other action lines that are deemed relevant to youth development in ASEAN;

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1 Structured based on the five (5) domains of ASEAN Youth Development Index (YDI). At the 31st ASEAN Summit, ASEAN Leaders declared their commitment to pursue and provide all necessary support and assistance to realise the goals and objectives of the ASEAN YDI consistent with ASEAN Member States’ respective national interests. The Leaders tasked the AMMY, with the support of the SOMY and other relevant ASEAN Sectoral Ministerial Bodies to take necessary efforts in this regard.
c. To formulate, implement, review and evaluate the priority areas and projects/activities on youth development and ASEAN awareness raising in the ASEAN Work Plan on Youth, in alignment with the regional strategies and measures;

d. To enhance the sharing of resources and information on youth development;

e. To formulate the common positions of ASEAN in youth development issues especially in preparation for ASEAN meetings and other relevant regional or international fora;

f. To utilise cost-sharing arrangements in funding collaborative activities in youth development in the implementation of regional activities;

g. To strengthen coordination with other relevant ASEAN bodies, entities and mechanisms to complement the implementation of youth development-related activities and projects;

h. To collaborate with ASEAN's Dialogue Partners; regional, international and multilateral agencies; NGOs/CSOs and the private sector in advancing the objectives of ASEAN cooperation in youth development; and

i. To establish ad-hoc working groups and/or expert task forces to provide assistance in performing certain technical and specific functions, as appropriate, with defined terms of reference and duration.

D. Composition and Structure

10. The SOMY shall comprise senior representatives at the Permanent Secretary/Director General level, from the Ministries responsible for youth of ASEAN Member States.

11. ASEAN Dialogue Partners, relevant regional and international agencies and partners may be invited, with the consent of the SOMY, to attend the open sessions to promote collaboration and partnerships.

E. Procedures
12. The Senior Officials Meeting on Youth (SOMY) will meet at least once a year. Participation of ASEAN Member States and the ASEAN Secretariat to the SOMY shall be on self-financing basis.

13. In between its regular meetings, SOMY may convene a special meeting or similar formats as necessary and to be hosted by ASEAN Member State on a voluntary offer.

14. The SOMY shall report to the AMMY by submitting necessary official documents for consideration and adoption/notation.

F. Decision Making

15. Decision-making in SOMY shall be based on consultation and consensus in accordance with the ASEAN Charter.

16. Matters requiring the attention and/or decision of SOMY shall be channeled through the SOMY Chair for consultation with the members of SOMY. Consultation for decision-making shall be done during the Meeting or through ad-referendum by the SOMY Chair or the ASEAN Secretariat as assigned by the SOMY Chair.

G. Chairpersonship and Vice-Chairpersonship

17. The Chairpersonship period of SOMY is two (2) years and will be rotated alphabetically.

18. The Chairpersonship of SOMY shall commence at the start of every odd calendar year.

19. The incoming Chair shall act as the Vice-Chair during the SOMY.

H. Roles and Responsibilities of the Chair and Vice-Chair

20. The Chair of SOMY shall provide assistance for the Chair of AMMY in performing its duties as stipulated in the TOR of AMMY and to present reports, policy papers and provides recommendations of the SOMY to the AMMY for their consideration.

21. The Vice-Chair shall provide support to the Chair during the SOMY in undertaking his/her roles and responsibilities.
I. Amendments

22. The TOR shall be regularly reviewed to ensure relevance and coherence with the regional development of ASEAN.

23. Any ASEAN Member State may propose amendments to the TOR.

24. Amendments to the TOR shall be made as appropriate upon mutual consent of all ASEAN Member States.

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