

# **ASEAN 2045**

## **OUR SHARED FUTURE**



one vision, one identity, one community





# **ASEAN 2045 OUR SHARED FUTURE**

The ASEAN Secretariat  
Jakarta

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established on 8 August 1967. The Member States are Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.

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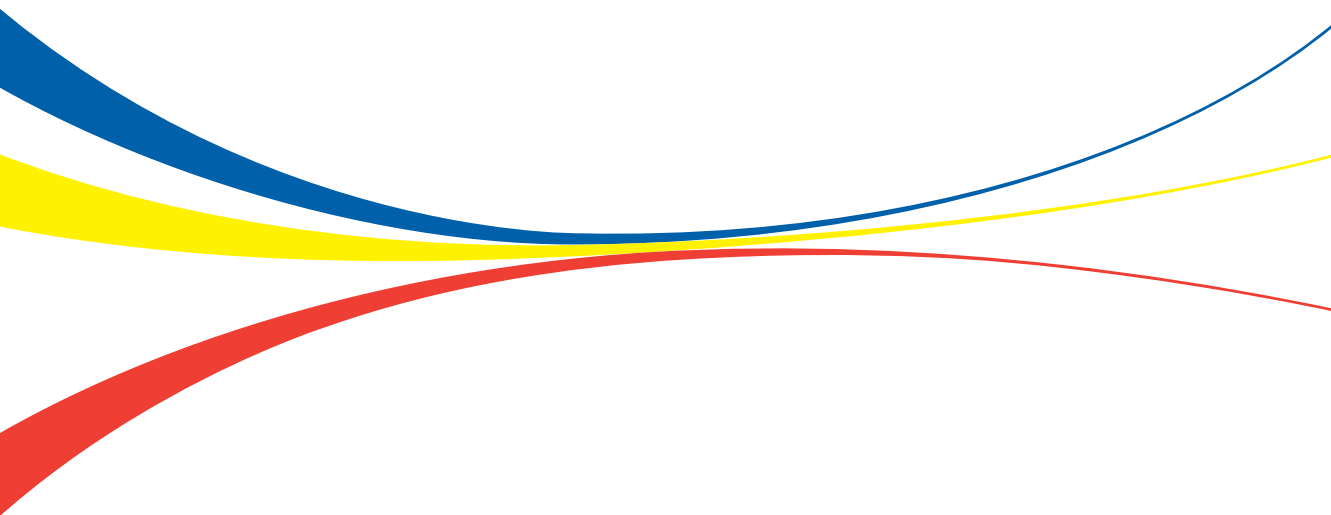
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# **KUALA LUMPUR DECLARATION ON ASEAN 2045: OUR SHARED FUTURE**







## **Kuala Lumpur Declaration on ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future**

**WE**, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), namely Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand, and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, gathered in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on the occasion of the 46<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit, on 26 May 2025;

**RECALLING** the *Kuala Lumpur Declaration on ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together* (Kuala Lumpur, 2015), the *Ha Noi Declaration on the ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision* (Ha Noi, 2020), the *ASEAN Leaders' Statement on ASEAN Connectivity Post-2025 Agenda* (Phnom Penh, 2022), the *ASEAN Leaders' Statement on the Development of the ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision* (Labuan Bajo, 2023), and the *ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on the Development of the Strategic Plans to Implement the ASEAN Community Vision 2045* (Vientiane, 2024);

**REAFFIRMING** our commitment to the shared principles, purposes, values and norms enshrined in the ASEAN Charter, the United Nations Charter, other ASEAN instruments and international law;

**UNDERSCORING** the importance of enhancing ASEAN's resilience and promoting collective, efficient, effective and innovative responses to regional and global challenges and future shocks, which would help secure the future of ASEAN and its peoples;

**BEING COGNISANT** of the opportunities brought about by the existing and future megatrends as well as their impact on the lives of the ASEAN peoples;

**RESOLVING** to realise a resilient, innovative, dynamic and people-centred ASEAN by 2045 in which ASEAN Member States are united by regional solidarity and cooperation;

**ENVISIONING** a developed ASEAN as the epicentre of growth in the Indo-Pacific region;

**UNDERSCORING** the importance of a shared ASEAN identity and the sense of belonging among the peoples of ASEAN and where inclusive, participatory and equitable access to economic opportunities is promoted and sustainability is achieved in all dimensions;

**ACKNOWLEDGING** the achievements and lessons learned from the implementation of the *ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together* comprising the Blueprints of the ASEAN Political-Security Community, ASEAN Economic Community, ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community, as well as the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 and the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plans III and IV, which have contributed to the development of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and its Strategic Plans;

**REAFFIRMING** our commitment to strengthening the ASEAN Community, its unity, and Centrality, as well as its proactive role as the primary driving force in shaping and leading the rules-based regional architecture; and

**EMPHASISING** the importance of strengthening ASEAN's institutional capacity and effectiveness in further advancing ASEAN Community-building;

**DO HEREBY:**

1. **ADOPT** the *ASEAN Community Vision 2045 “Resilient, Innovative, Dynamic, and People-Centred ASEAN”* along with the ASEAN Political-Security Community Strategic Plan, the ASEAN Economic Community Strategic Plan, the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Strategic Plan, and the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan;
2. **AGREE** that this Declaration as well as the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and its Strategic Plans shall comprise the *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future*;
3. **DECIDE** that the *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future* succeeds the *ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together*;
4. **AGREE** that the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan V (2026-2030) to be adopted at the 47<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit is an integral part of the *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future*;
5. **RESOLVE** that ASEAN Member States shall implement, through ASEAN Organs and Bodies, the *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future* in a timely and effective manner, and ensure seamless coordination across pillars and sectors of the identified cross-pillar and cross-sectoral strategic measures;
6. **ENCOURAGE** other relevant stakeholders to support and contribute to the implementation of the *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future*;
7. **AGREE** to enhance ASEAN's institutional capacity and effectiveness, and strengthen the ASEAN Secretariat, to advance the implementation of the *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future*;

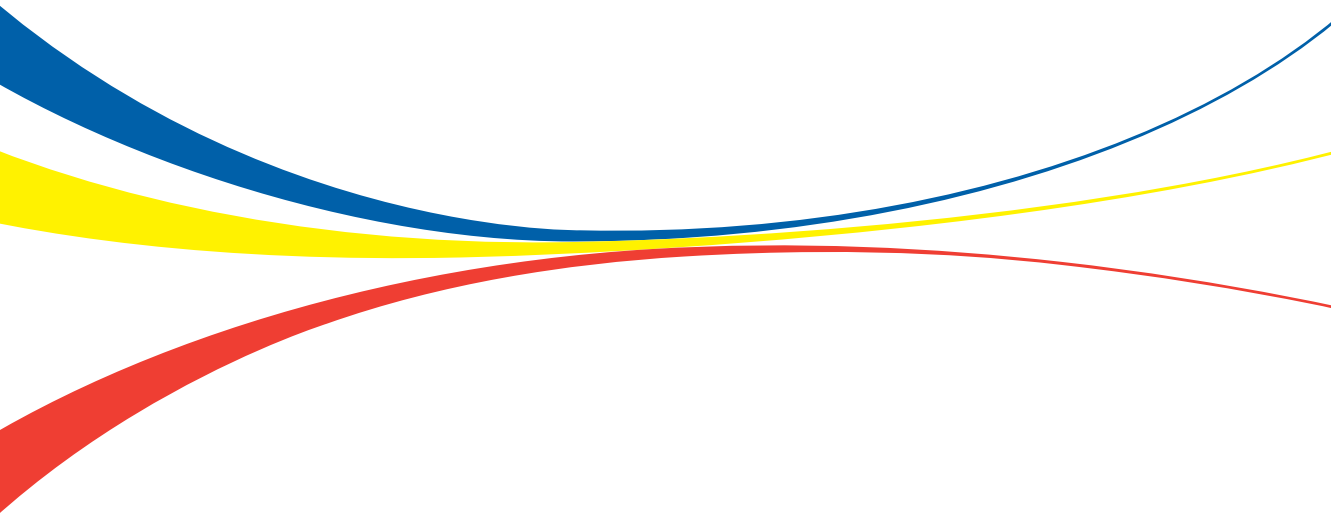
8. **TASK** the ASEAN Ministers and respective ASEAN Organs and Bodies, supported by the Secretary-General of ASEAN and the ASEAN Secretariat, to mobilise resources from ASEAN Member States and external sources to implement the *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future*;
9. **FURTHER TASK** the ASEAN Ministers and respective ASEAN Organs and Bodies, supported by the Secretary-General of ASEAN and the ASEAN Secretariat, to undertake communication activities to facilitate the implementation of the *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future*;
10. **TASK** the Secretary-General of ASEAN to monitor and report on the progress of implementation of the *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future* to the ASEAN Summit annually, through the ASEAN Coordinating Council and respective ASEAN Community Councils;
11. **AGREE** on a mid-term review for the *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future*, including the possibility of ASEAN Member States proposing updates and changes as necessary in the periods in between to ensure that it is adaptive and responsive to the current and evolving opportunities and challenges; and
12. **DECIDE** that the review of and updates to the Strategic Plans of the *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future* shall be coordinated by the ASEAN Community Councils and the ASEAN Coordinating Council in accordance with agreed processes to ensure their relevance and responsiveness to regional and global developments.

**DONE** at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia this Twenty Sixth Day of May in the Year Two Thousand and Twenty-Five in a single original copy in the English language.





**ASEAN COMMUNITY VISION 2045  
“RESILIENT, INNOVATIVE, DYNAMIC,  
AND PEOPLE-CENTRED ASEAN”**





# **ASEAN Community Vision 2045**

## **“Resilient, Innovative, Dynamic, and People-Centred ASEAN”**

### **I. Introduction**

1. We, the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (hereinafter referred to as ASEAN), namely Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand, and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, gather here today at the 46<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, to reaffirm our commitment to building a resilient, innovative, dynamic, people-centred ASEAN, through the adoption of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045.
2. We remain a rules-based Community of nations committed to the letter and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations (UN), the ASEAN Charter, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) and other ASEAN instruments.
3. We shall place the ASEAN peoples at the heart of our efforts and ensure the meaningful and inclusive participation of all stakeholders in our ASEAN Community-building process.
4. We shall uphold the principles of democracy, the rule of law and good governance, respect for and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.
5. We envision a prosperous ASEAN as a single market with highly-skilled and inclusive workforce, productivity and innovation-driven growth, and incorporating sustainability across and along the value chain.
6. We underline the need for ASEAN to remain as the locomotive for peace, stability and prosperity in the region. ASEAN shall respond effectively to challenges and complex geopolitical and socio-economic environments in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond.
7. We envisage ASEAN within an interconnected global community of nations with deeper connectivity and cohesiveness. In this regard, we will strengthen ASEAN Centrality in our external relations.
8. We endeavour to strengthen ASEAN's institutions and to refresh processes to be more resilient, innovative, agile, adaptive, responsive, and decisive in addressing the increasing cross-cutting issues.

## **II. Challenges and Opportunities**

9. The rapidly evolving global environment will continue to require effective and innovative responses to secure the future of ASEAN and its peoples. We are mindful of the impacts, as well as inherent opportunities of existing and future megatrends such as, but not limited to:
  - Maintenance of peace, security and stability in the Indo-Pacific region including the South China Sea;
  - Major power rivalries;
  - Digitalisation and its impacts on the future of work;
  - Cybersecurity;
  - Artificial intelligence;
  - Rising protectionism and barriers to trade and investment;
  - Supply chain resilience;
  - Blue economy;
  - Food, water and energy security;
  - Poverty, widening development gaps and scarcity of funding;
  - Natural disasters;
  - Climate change, environmental degradation, biodiversity loss and transition to a green economy;
  - Pandemics, communicable and non-communicable diseases;
  - Increased world population, ageing societies and migration;
  - Inclusion of vulnerable and marginalised groups;
  - Empowerment of women and youth; and
  - ASEAN Connectivity.
10. We need to strengthen ASEAN’s institutional capacity and effectiveness, which include but not limited to, arriving at decisions on urgent and specific situations in a timely manner, promoting greater synergy and coordination in cross-pillar and cross-sectoral issues, optimising work processes, effective mobilisation of resources, and strengthening the ASEAN Secretariat.



### **III. Our Future ASEAN**

We shall realise a resilient, innovative, dynamic and people-centred ASEAN by 2045. We will be guided by the *Core Elements of the ASEAN Community’s Post-2025 Vision*, which we endorsed at the 42<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN Summit in Labuan Bajo, Indonesia. We envision a developed ASEAN as the epicentre of growth in the Indo-Pacific region.

Our future ASEAN will be:

#### **Political-Security**

11. A peaceful, stable and secure region based on the fundamental principles as enshrined in the ASEAN Charter, the UN Charter and international law, including international humanitarian law, subscribed to by ASEAN Member States.
12. A Community that sustains and reinforces its centrality through ASEAN-led mechanisms and other relevant platforms, leveraging its strengths in the peaceful conduct of relations among states, as well as in forging new and potential partnerships while ensuring substantive and mutually beneficial relations.
13. A Community that is able to project ASEAN position on regional and global issues.
14. An ASEAN that remains a primary driving force in shaping the regional architecture and contributes towards a rules-based international order amidst geopolitical tensions and rivalries.
15. An ASEAN that is a contributor to the maintenance of international peace and security through upholding the rules-based multilateral system and international law.
16. A Southeast Asia that is a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality, and free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.
17. An ASEAN with shared commitment to maintaining and promoting peace, security and stability in the region, as well as to the peaceful resolution of disputes, including full respect for legal and diplomatic processes, without resorting to the threat or use of force, in accordance with the universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

18. A Community that pursues the implementation of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) through concrete projects and activities.
19. An inclusive and cohesive Community that respects political, social, religious, cultural, ethnic diversities, which upholds the principles of democracy, rule of law and good governance, and respects fundamental freedoms, promotes and protects human rights, and promotes social justice.

## **Economic**

20. A major player in the global economy and the fourth largest economy in the world; a single and future-ready economy, anchored on sustainable growth and good governance, empowered by advanced technologies and responsive to emerging opportunities.
21. A nimble and resilient Community that is empowered in responding to future crises and long-term challenges. We continue to narrow development gaps through relevant initiatives and promote inclusive, participatory, and equitable access to economic opportunities.
22. A more globally competitive and seamlessly integrated single market and production centre, with a significant increase in intra-ASEAN trade and investment and enhanced global supply chain linkages, that harnesses its collective impact and influence as a major player in the global economy. We aspire for ASEAN to be the industrial and manufacturing hub of the Indo-Pacific with dynamic micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs).
23. An enterprising region as well as a hub and centre of excellence, that is able to leverage on advances in sciences, technology and innovation, and harness new sources of competitiveness, including creative economy and advanced industry, to elevate its economic integration agenda and create a thriving ecosystem.
24. A leading and connected Digital and Technological Community with open and interoperable, secure and trusted digital ecosystem, supported by advanced digital services that will harness its potential of digital transformation and bring the greatest benefits to ASEAN and its peoples.
25. A Community with strong and mutually beneficial economic relations with external partners anchored on agreements and other forms of cooperation that maintain ASEAN Centrality while generating value for stakeholders, including by bolstering innovation, sharing knowledge, building capacity, and strengthening sectoral cooperation.

26. A Community that is an integral part of the global supply chain, by streamlining downstream and upstream production process, strengthening distribution and logistics networks, as well as safeguarding access to raw materials to reach maximum efficiency and increase the production scale of value-added goods.
27. A Community that is economically and financially resilient, by among others, promoting the use of local currencies for cross-border transactions to reduce the region’s vulnerability to external volatility, enhancing disaster risk financing, and mitigating the risks/impact arising from climate change and environmental degradation.

### **Economic/Socio-Cultural**

28. A green ASEAN that will be achieved through sustainable growth on land and in water, as we embrace the green economy and blue economy in the regional context, and strengthen ASEAN’s position in promoting sustainability and climate responses.

### **Socio-Cultural**

29. A Community that is people-centred, people-oriented, and interconnected with seamless movement of peoples, goods, and services with a shared ASEAN ownership and identity.
30. A caring Community that will ensure the full potential and improve the quality of life for its peoples that is participative, inclusive, sustainable, and promotes social cohesion, hereby ensuring shared prosperity, especially among vulnerable groups, and leaving no one behind.
31. A Community that is able to optimise its demographic bonus to, among others, make ASEAN the epicentre of growth and innovation through inclusive, comprehensive and transformative education in a conducive learning environment to develop a highly skilled and competitive labour force, and the creation of decent work and high-quality jobs.
32. A healthy ASEAN populace, with higher life expectancy, well-being for all ages, safe from communicable and non-communicable diseases with Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and access to resilient healthcare architecture.

33. A Community where its peoples play an active role in all aspects of life through promotion of human security, enhancing peoples’ resilience through public-private partnerships in line with ASEAN sustainability agenda.
34. A Community with a shared ASEAN identity that is adaptive and responsive to evolving national needs, as well as relevant regional and global issues.
35. A Community where women are empowered to participate fully and effectively in ASEAN Community-building and realise their full potential in its decision-making processes.
36. A Community where youth can meaningfully contribute to the strengthening of a dynamic, innovative, resilient ASEAN Community, and in addressing contemporary and emerging challenges, advancing sustainable socio economic development, and reinforcing ASEAN awareness, values and identity.
37. A Community that is proud of its identity and assumes ownership of the preservation, conservation and value creation of its cultural heritage, arts and traditions while also promoting cultural industries.
38. A Community that advances sports to contribute towards the growth of ASEAN as a sporting hub for excellence to promote peace, inclusion, health, education and socio-economic development.

### **Connectivity**

39. A seamlessly integrated Community with enhanced linkages within and between ASEAN Member States, connected through, among others, sustainable infrastructure, payments connectivity infrastructure, continuous digital innovation, enhanced cybersecurity, regulatory excellence, efficient and resilient logistics and supply chains, efficient cross-border flow of information, and greater people-to-people connectivity throughout the region. ASEAN will adopt a whole-of-Community approach to enhance ASEAN Connectivity by promoting synergies with key connectivity initiatives as well as other sub-regional and multilateral cooperation frameworks.
40. A Community capable of managing future urban growth by leveraging modern technologies, and innovative infrastructure, as well as enhancing ASEAN smart and sustainable cities.

## **Institutional Strengthening**

41. A Community that is anchored on ASEAN Centrality with enhanced institutional capacity and effectiveness, with ASEAN organs, bodies and mechanisms that are more decisive, responsive and timely as well as future-ready in addressing global and regional challenges, supported by a strengthened ASEAN Secretariat, with effective cross-sectoral and cross-pillar coordination, and sufficient ASEAN funding towards realising the ASEAN Community Vision 2045.

## **IV. Our Commitment**

42. We hereby adopt the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and task the ASEAN Coordinating Council, ASEAN Community Councils and ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee, with the support of the ASEAN Secretariat, to fully and effectively implement the commitments under this Vision Statement, namely Political-Security, Economic, Socio-Cultural, Connectivity, and Institutional Strengthening, to achieve a resilient, innovative, dynamic, and people-centred ASEAN Community.





# ASEAN POLITICAL-SECURITY COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN





# **ASEAN Political-Security Community Strategic Plan**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

1. The *ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) Blueprint 2025* provides the roadmap in ASEAN's journey towards what is envisioned to be a political-security community, one of the three pillars of the ASEAN Community. The effective implementation of the Blueprint has significantly contributed to the ASEAN Community-building process under the APSC Pillar and elevated ASEAN political and security cooperation to a higher level.
2. With the completion of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, a successor ASEAN Community Vision 2045 was crafted, along with the APSC Strategic Plan which is meant to contribute to efforts in realising a resilient, innovative, dynamic and people-centred ASEAN by 2045.
3. Amidst the intensified geopolitical dynamics, ASEAN shall continue to drive the regional architecture and project its position on regional and global issues. ASEAN remains committed to maintaining and promoting peace, security and stability in the region, as well as to the peaceful resolution of disputes.
4. The APSC Strategic Plan is guided by the ASEAN Charter as well as other key ASEAN instruments and documents, which provide the principles and frameworks for ASEAN political and security cooperation and their implementation. The strategic measures provided in the APSC Strategic Plan shall be translated into initiatives, projects and programmes in pursuing the Strategic Goals.
5. Cognisant of the rapidly evolving global environment, especially in the post-2025 era, the implementation of the Strategic Plan will require an innovative, responsive, inclusive, forward-looking and people-centred approach. This is to ensure the relevance of the APSC Strategic Plan in anticipating and effectively addressing the impacts, while seizing the inherent opportunities, of existing and future megatrends.

## **II. STRATEGIC GOALS OF APSC STRATEGIC PLAN**

6. The APSC Strategic Plan contains nine Strategic Goals pertaining to political-security cooperation, which are interconnected and complementary to one another. It shall be pursued in a holistic manner, which allows for greater synergy and coordination across sectors under

the APSC Pillar, as well as with the other Community Pillars and ASEAN Connectivity, where relevant.

7. The Strategic Goals of the APSC Strategic Plan are as follows:

### **STRATEGIC GOAL 1**

A peaceful, stable and secure region based on the fundamental principles as enshrined in the ASEAN Charter, the United Nations (UN) Charter and international law, including international humanitarian law, subscribed to by ASEAN Member States.

#### **Objectives**

- To adhere to and promote the principles of the ASEAN Charter, including peaceful settlement of disputes, and to refrain from the threat or use of force, in accordance with international law.
- To strengthen the rule of law, judicial systems and legal infrastructure.

#### **Strategic Measures**

In pursuing Strategic Goal 1, the following Strategic Measures are identified across two focus areas, namely:

##### **A. Adhere to and promote fundamental principles based on the ASEAN Charter**

- 1.1. Reaffirm the purposes and uphold the fundamental principles enshrined in the ASEAN Charter and other key ASEAN instruments, including the *Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC)* and the *Treaty of Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ)*.
- 1.2. Conduct activities to promote awareness and understanding of the principles and norms in key ASEAN instruments, including the ASEAN Charter, the TAC and the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP), as well as promote adherence to the TAC's underlying principles among High Contracting Parties.
- 1.3. Further strengthen legal infrastructure in ASEAN, including but not limited to exploring the harmonisation of trade laws, strengthening ASEAN's capacity on crime prevention and criminal justice, and mutual legal assistance in civil and commercial matters.
- 1.4. Promote activities and programmes to strengthen networking and cooperation between ASEAN, ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly

(AIPA) and Council of ASEAN Chiefs' Justice (CACJ) to support a rules-based ASEAN.

- 1.5. Enhance cooperation and coordination among relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and legal and judicial Entities associated with ASEAN, including engagements between the ASEAN Law Ministers Meeting (ALAWMM) and the ASEAN Law Association (ALA), as well as explore cooperation among relevant competent authorities of ASEAN Member States dealing with prosecutorial matters, to strengthen the rule of law, judicial systems and legal infrastructure.
- 1.6. Promote knowledge of political and legal systems, culture and history of ASEAN Member States to enhance the understanding of and respect for the common identity and diversity of ASEAN.

**B. Adhere to international law and promote a culture of peace, dialogue and cooperation**

- 1.7. Uphold the principles of international law governing the peaceful conduct of relations and respect for the UN Charter.
- 1.8. Promote an enabling environment for peace, stability and shared prosperity by ensuring a culture of dialogue and cooperation and enhancing mutual trust and confidence and respect for international law.
- 1.9. Advance the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) process to preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution through effective revitalisation of its mechanisms and proactive implementation of its Work Plans while consolidating confidence-building measures.
- 1.10. Strengthen partnership with the UN on preventive diplomacy capacity-building programmes, experience-sharing and training through ASEAN-led mechanisms, as well as explore cooperation with other relevant international and regional organisations, in line with ASEAN principles.
- 1.11. Enhance cooperation and coordination among participating ASEAN Member States in UN peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding efforts.
- 1.12. Collaborate with leading global institutions to strengthen ASEAN's research activities on peace, reconciliation, conflict management and conflict resolution.
- 1.13. Strengthen ASEAN's capacity on crime prevention and criminal justice by enhancing access to justice and legal assistance, including through public education and outreach activities.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL 2**

A Community that sustains and reinforces its centrality through ASEAN-led mechanisms and other relevant platforms, leveraging its strengths in the peaceful conduct of relations among states, as well as in forging new and potential partnerships while ensuring substantive and mutually beneficial relations.

### **Objectives**

- To strengthen ASEAN Centrality in external relations while remaining actively engaged, outward-looking, inclusive and non-discriminatory, in line with the ASEAN Charter.
- To reach out to new and potential partners, and to ensure that all ASEAN partnerships are substantive, meaningful and mutually beneficial.
- To enhance defence and security dialogue as well as practical cooperation among ASEAN Member States and ASEAN's external partners for a peaceful, secure and stable region.

### **Strategic Measures**

In pursuing Strategic Goal 2, the following Strategic Measures are identified across three focus areas, namely:

#### **A. Sustain and reinforce ASEAN Centrality in the evolving regional architecture**

- 2.1. Strengthen ASEAN centrality in shaping and leading the evolving regional architecture to remain open, transparent, inclusive and rules-based that upholds international law, including through enhancing the effectiveness of ASEAN-led mechanisms.
- 2.2. Strengthen ASEAN-led mechanisms in navigating geopolitical dynamics amidst major power rivalry in the region as well as addressing current and future challenges and opportunities.
- 2.3. Enhance understanding and visibility of ASEAN through relevant ASEAN Centres and ASEAN Committees in Third Countries and International Organisations (ACTCs).
- 2.4. Enhance the role of the ACTCs in promoting ASEAN and its potential as well as cooperation between ASEAN and the host countries/ international organisations.

## **B. Strengthen ASEAN-led mechanisms**

- 2.5. Enhance the role of the Chair of ASEAN as stipulated in the ASEAN Charter to ensure more effective and timely ASEAN responses to specific challenges.
- 2.6. Strengthen the East Asia Summit (EAS) as a premier Leaders-led forum for dialogue and cooperation on broad strategic, political and economic issues of common interest and concern.
- 2.7. Improve the efficiency of EAS processes on dialogue and cooperation on broad strategic, political and economic issues.
- 2.8. Ensure effective implementation of activities and projects under the EAS cooperation framework in identified areas under the EAS Plan of Action, including the implementation of the AOIP through relevant workstreams.
- 2.9. Enhance the role of the Chair of the ARF to further promote dialogue and cooperation on political-security issues through information-sharing and coordination among ARF Participants, promotion of confidence-building measures, preventive diplomacy activities and conflict resolution initiatives.
- 2.10. Utilise the recommendations of the ARF Experts and Eminent Persons (EEP) to strengthen the ARF process, where appropriate.
- 2.11. Enhance the effective participation of ARF defence officials in ARF activities, including through strengthening the role of the ARF Defence Officials' Dialogue (DOD) and ARF Security Policy Conference (ASPC).
- 2.12. Encourage interaction between the ARF Meeting of the Heads of Defence Universities, Colleges and Institutions (HDUCIM) with the Network of ASEAN Defence and Security Institutions (NADI) to promote cooperation on security education and research.
- 2.13. Enhance the role of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) in promoting strategic dialogue on defence and security issues as well as practical cooperation to enhance regional peace, security and stability.
- 2.14. Pursue strategic dialogue, consultations and practical cooperation through the ADMM-Plus in order to promote closer cooperation in addressing common regional defence and security issues between ASEAN and its Dialogue Partners and other external parties.
- 2.15. Ensure effective implementation of the ADMM-Plus EWG Observership Programme to keep the ADMM-Plus open and inclusive.

- 2.16. Explore modalities of cooperation that would enable non-Plus countries to participate in ADMM-Plus EWG activities, as determined by the ADMM based on consensus.
  - 2.17. Promote information-sharing and timely and effective communication among defence policy-makers of ASEAN and Plus Countries, including through leveraging the ASEAN Direct Communications Infrastructure (ADI) to contribute to confidence-building in the region.
  - 2.18. Regularly review existing initiatives and align priorities of ADMM and ADMM-Plus cooperation with emerging regional and international issues of common concern.
  - 2.19. Enhance civil-military coordination and forge stronger partnership and collaboration with ASEAN's partners and related stakeholders in providing effective and timely response to major natural disasters and emergencies, in line with existing frameworks such as the *Standard Operating Procedure for Regional Standby Arrangements and Coordination of Joint Disaster Relief and Emergency Response Operations* (SASOP).
  - 2.20. Implement new initiatives to strengthen the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) process and cooperation with ASEAN as the driving force towards regional resilience and preparedness against emerging challenges and future shocks.
  - 2.21. Ensure timely and effective implementation of activities and measures under the APT Cooperation Work Plans.
  - 2.22. Continue the biennial publication of the ASEAN Security Outlook and the annual publication of the ARF Security Outlook.
  - 2.23. Enhance cooperation and coordination among ASEAN-led mechanisms, including through information-sharing between mechanisms such as APT, EAS, ARF and ADMM-Plus.
  - 2.24. Build synergy on disaster management among ASEAN bodies and ASEAN-led mechanisms to promote sustainable resilience and strengthen ASEAN's collective capability towards climate and disaster resilience.
- C. Deepen existing partnerships and forge new and potential partnerships, while ensuring substantive and mutually beneficial relations**
- 2.25. Review existing cooperation with regional organisations that ASEAN has partnerships with and explore further areas of cooperation.

- 2.26. Pursue an outward-looking approach and reach out to new potential partners, including other regions and relevant regional organisations, based on shared interest, constructive engagement and mutual benefit.
- 2.27. Enhance the implementation of sustainable and mutually beneficial projects between ASEAN and its external partners to further strengthen ASEAN Community-building, including through effective utilisation of cooperation funds.
- 2.28. Strengthen engagement between the CPR and the ASEAN Secretariat with Ambassadors of non-ASEAN Member States and relevant intergovernmental organisations accredited to ASEAN.
- 2.29. Share best practices and successful case studies on engagement and integration policies with Dialogue Partners and other external parties, including relevant regional and international organisations.
- 2.30. Explore potential cooperation projects with external parties and the High-Contracting Parties to the TAC which are not formal partners of ASEAN.

### **STRATEGIC GOAL 3**

A Community that is able to project ASEAN position on regional and global issues.

#### **Objectives**

- To project its common position on regional and global issues and respond collectively and constructively to regional and global developments.
- To anticipate, monitor, respond and adapt to current and emerging challenges.
- To enhance ASEAN's credibility and standing as a regional and global player.

#### **Strategic Measures**

In pursuing Strategic Goal 3, the following Strategic Measures are identified:

- 3.1. Sustain the timely issuance of ASEAN Statements on important regional and international issues of common concern while respecting the principles of independence, sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity, non-interference and national identity.
- 3.2. Enhance ASEAN's leading role and centrality in discussions on Southeast Asia and other regional and international issues impacting the region at relevant regional and international fora.

- 3.3. Enhance strategic dialogue between ASEAN and external partners regarding cross-cutting issues within the region and international issues that impact ASEAN.
- 3.4. Strengthen coordination on ASEAN's common position on issues related to non-proliferation, disarmament and peaceful uses of nuclear energy at multilateral fora and international organisations.
- 3.5. Continue the practice of delivering ASEAN common statements at the UN and other international fora, where appropriate.
- 3.6. Sustain the practice of convening special meetings at the Leaders, Ministers, Senior Officials or CPR levels, including through video conferencing, to address urgent situations affecting regional peace and stability in a timely manner and in consultation with the relevant sectoral bodies.
- 3.7. Strengthen coordination among ASEAN Member States and where possible, submit ASEAN candidatures to important posts in multilateral fora.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL 4**

An ASEAN that remains a primary driving force in shaping the regional architecture and contributes towards a rules-based international order amidst geopolitical tensions and rivalries.

### **Objectives**

- To leverage ASEAN's strengths towards the peaceful conduct of relations among States and to respond to new geopolitical and non-traditional threats and challenges for a safe, secure, stable, synergised and strategic Community.
- To ensure ASEAN as a locomotive of peace, stability and security amidst geopolitical tensions and rivalries.

### **Strategic Measures**

In pursuing Strategic Goal 4, the following Strategic Measures are identified:

- 4.1. Work with Dialogue Partners, UN and other relevant bodies on preventive diplomacy, where appropriate, to effectively address existing and emerging challenges in the region.



- 4.2. Promote exchanges, interactions and confidence-building measures (CBMs) in current and emerging fields of security, including but not limited to maritime security, cybersecurity, counterterrorism, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, peacekeeping operations (PKO) and military medicine.
- 4.3. Encourage implementation of ADMM-adopted documents or guidelines as part of CBMs for militaries to improve operational safety in the air and maritime domains.
- 4.4. Support the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC) to lead comprehensive efforts in addressing humanitarian challenges caused by explosive remnants of war (ERW) through effective study and documentation, sharing of best practices and capacity-building initiatives.
- 4.5. Sustain the effective implementation of the *ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism (ACCT)* and the *ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ACTIP)* and their respective plans of action to effectively identify, refer and protect victims and potential victims.
- 4.6. Enhance cooperation and partnership with Dialogue Partners and other relevant external parties to combat trafficking in persons and people smuggling.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL 5**

An ASEAN that is a contributor to the maintenance of international peace and security through upholding the rules-based multilateral system and international law.

### **Objectives**

- To adhere to and uphold ASEAN's fundamental principles, values, norms and effective consensus-based decision-making mechanism in addressing issues facing the region for a united, cohesive, resilient and rules-based Community.
- To address current and future traditional and non-traditional security challenges through a comprehensive, coordinated, coherent, effective and sustained approach to be a responsive and adaptive Community.

## Strategic Measures

In pursuing Strategic Goal 5, the following Strategic Measures are identified across two focus areas, namely:

### **A. Contribute to the maintenance of international peace by upholding international law and a rules-based multilateral system**

- 5.1. Enhance the constructive role of ASEAN in, and promote a rules-based approach towards, the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the ASEAN Charter, the TAC and other relevant ASEAN instruments as well as principles of international law.
- 5.2. Enhance cooperation and engagement between ALAWMM and ALA, and other Track II organisations through seminars, workshops and research on international law, including ASEAN agreements.
- 5.3. Strengthen the participation of ASEAN Member States in UN peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding efforts outside the region on a flexible, voluntary and non-binding basis.
- 5.4. Enhance the active participation of ASEAN Member States in Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, including through the implementation of the ASEAN Regional Work Plan on WPS and encourage ASEAN Member States to promote the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agenda.
- 5.5. Encourage the ASEAN Peacekeeping Centres Network (APCN) to strengthen the collaboration among centres of excellence and develop common gender-responsive peacekeeping training manuals as well as explore possible areas of cooperation with ADMM-Plus EWG on Peacekeeping Operations.
- 5.6. Utilise and strengthen the APCN to enhance capacity-building, and highlight the contributions of ASEAN Member States to the UN.
- 5.7. Enhance dialogue and cooperation with peacekeeping centres, academic institutions and think-tanks in other regions as well as the UN and other regional and international organisations on peacekeeping, through information-sharing on best practices as well as capacity-building in peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding.
- 5.8. Promote coordination among ASEAN Member States with regard to multilateral discussions on emerging issues involving international peace and security, such as outer space and autonomous weapons systems.

**B. Address existing and emerging traditional and non-traditional security challenges**

- 5.9. Activate the ASEAN Troika, through consultation and consensus, to address urgent situations affecting regional peace and stability in a timely manner.
- 5.10. Enhance exchanges and cooperation between defence officials and exchange of visits between military training institutions to promote trust and mutual understanding.
- 5.11. Promote ASEAN's common position in various regional and multilateral fora related to preventing and combatting transnational crime and illicit drugs, as approved by the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC) and the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters (AMMD).

**B.1. Strengthen cooperation in addressing and combatting transnational crime and other emerging issues**

- 5.12. Strengthen ASEAN's effort to combat transnational crime covering terrorism, illicit drug trafficking, trafficking in persons (TIP), people smuggling, illicit trafficking of wildlife and timber, arms smuggling, sea piracy and armed robbery against ships, money laundering, international economic crime, cybercrime and online scams, including through enhancing cooperation with ASEAN's external partners as well as the implementation of relevant work programmes, such as through increased information exchange, experience sharing, joint training and other relevant activities.
- 5.13. Endeavour to align and coordinate ASEAN and national level efforts to effectively prevent TIP, protect and support victims, enforce trafficking and related laws, prosecute offenders and enhance regional and international cooperation in countering TIP.
- 5.14. Consider the formulation of regional legal instruments and harmonisation of relevant national policies, laws and regulations among ASEAN Member States to further strengthen regional efforts to combat transnational crime.
- 5.15. Strengthen community resilience against the negative impacts of illicit drugs, through but not limited to public awareness, educational campaign, outreach programmes, including by utilising online platforms, particularly for at-risk and vulnerable groups.
- 5.16. Explore the possibility of developing new regional legal instruments in the area of transnational crime.

- 5.17. Strengthen the role of the AMMTC, AMMD and their subsidiary mechanisms to be adaptive and responsive in addressing existing and emerging transnational crime and illicit drugs, including strengthening the effectiveness of precursor chemical control.
- 5.18. Strengthen cross-sectoral and cross-pillar coordination among relevant ASEAN Organs/Sectoral Bodies/Entities on issues pertaining to combatting transnational crime, including border management and illicit drugs as well as precursor chemicals control, including through exchange of information and experience, capacity-building activities, joint exercises and other relevant activities.
- 5.19. Enhance cooperation and coordination among ASEAN Sectoral Bodies, law enforcement agencies and all relevant stakeholders including the private sector, media and civil society in dealing with transnational crime.
- 5.20. Strengthen ASEAN's capacity on crime prevention as well as the criminal justice system including judges, prosecutors, law enforcement and legal officials on combatting transnational crime and illicit drugs within ASEAN and with relevant regional and international organisations, taking into account the impact of accelerated digitalisation and advancement of technology.
- 5.21. Enhance law enforcement cooperation to combat transnational crime and illicit drugs, including through information and intelligence sharing, mutual legal assistance, coordinated patrols, law enforcement operations and the return of the proceeds of crime.
- 5.22. Expedite the conclusion of the ASEAN Extradition Treaty and ensure its effective implementation.
- 5.23. Consider accession to the ASEAN *Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters* (MLAT) by non-ASEAN countries.
- 5.24. Strengthen ASEAN cooperation in combatting and suppressing transnational crime, particularly document fraud/forgery and the monitoring of financial transactions suspected of supporting these crimes and acts of terrorism.
- 5.25. Enhance ASEAN cooperation to combat money laundering and pursue asset recovery of the proceeds of crime derived from or used as means for financing transnational crime, including those using digital currencies.
- 5.26. Strengthen and expand existing bilateral and multilateral law enforcement cooperation to combat transnational crime and illicit drugs, including through, but not limited to, direct cooperation between

ASEAN law enforcement agencies and competent authorities, MLAT, Border Liaison Offices (BLOs) and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL).

#### **B.1.i Continue to enhance cooperation against terrorism**

- 5.27. Enhance ASEAN initiatives and cooperation within and outside the region aimed at preventing, addressing and combatting the root causes of terrorism and conditions conducive to terrorism, violent extremism and radicalisation.
- 5.28. Promote sustained and proactive approaches in rehabilitation and reintegration programmes, as part of comprehensive measures to counter terrorism, including radicalisation and violent extremism.
- 5.29. Promote the process of reconciliation among violent extremists and victims through restorative justice and other initiatives, as appropriate, as part of comprehensive measures to counter terrorism, including radicalisation and violent extremism.
- 5.30. Strengthen ASEAN cooperation to enhance the moderation and tolerance agenda, through interfaith dialogue, inter-cultural and inter-religious literacy and de-radicalisation initiatives to negate and defuse radicalisation, self-radicalisation and violent extremism in ASEAN by empowering women, youth and local communities, including faith-based organisations and religious leaders.

#### **B.1.ii Continue to prevent and combat the flow of illicit drugs in the pursuit of a Drug-Free ASEAN**

- 5.31. Sustain work towards a significant reduction in the illicit manufacturing and trafficking of drugs and drug-related crime so as to achieve the vision of a Drug-Free ASEAN.
- 5.32. Strengthen collaboration between ASEAN Member States as well as with external partners to address the threat posed by the production, distribution and flow of illicit drugs.
- 5.33. Strengthen measures to suppress production, trafficking and abuse of illicit drugs as well as the control of import and export of precursor chemicals, including enhancing the scientific laboratory capacity of ASEAN Member States on precursor identification and drugs signature analysis.

- 5.34. Develop holistic, integrated and balanced strategies, evidence-based best practices and standards on policy formulation and interventions to address both supply and demand reduction, to achieve a balance between treatment and rehabilitation approaches as well as the law enforcement approach in combatting drug crimes.

**B.1.iii Strengthen cooperation in cybersecurity and address challenges arising from the use of information and communication technology**

- 5.35. Enhance ASEAN cooperation to respond to emerging challenges from the misuse and exploitation of information and communication technology (ICTs) and artificial intelligence (AI).
- 5.36. Strengthen cooperation in promoting cybersecurity and other emerging domains of new technology, through information exchange on cyber threats and cybersecurity best practices and build confidence and trust in network and digital infrastructure.

**B.1.iv Enhance cooperation on border management**

- 5.37. Strengthen cooperation on border management, in accordance with respective domestic laws and policies, to jointly address matters of common concern including forgery of travel documents and fraudulent use of identity papers, as well as explore the use of relevant technologies to stem cross-border flow of criminal actors, syndicates and terrorists, including foreign terrorist fighters.
- 5.38. Strengthen cooperation on immigration and consular matters to facilitate ease of movement of people and goods while securing the region from transnational threats, such as trafficking in persons, people smuggling and fraudulent documents.
- 5.39. Enhance cooperation in border control and management through cross-sectoral coordination across the three ASEAN Community pillars.
- 5.40. Enhance cooperation in providing consular assistance to nationals of ASEAN Member States, in line with the *Guidelines on Consular Assistance by ASEAN Member States Missions in Third Countries to Nationals of Other ASEAN Member States*, and *Guidelines for the Provision of Emergency Assistance by ASEAN Missions in Third Countries to Nationals of ASEAN Member Countries in Crisis Situations* and explore the possibility of mutually beneficial collaboration with external parties.

## **B.2. Strengthen cooperation in addressing non-traditional security issues, including transboundary challenges**

- 5.41. Enhance cooperation to address non-traditional security challenges, including issues related to food, water and energy security, and health security.
- 5.42. Strengthen ASEAN cooperation in addressing transboundary challenges through concrete and practical activities.
- 5.43. Strengthen cooperation with Dialogue Partners and other external parties to effectively address transboundary challenges.
- 5.44. Promote studies by relevant ASEAN centres, think-tanks, universities and other relevant academic institutions to identify new transboundary challenges arising from non-traditional security issues.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL 6**

A Southeast Asia that is a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality, and free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.

### **Objective**

- To promote and ensure that Southeast Asia remains a Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone and free of all other weapons of mass destruction, and to contribute actively to global efforts on non-proliferation, disarmament, and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

### **Strategic Measures**

In pursuing Strategic Goal 6, the following Strategic Measures are identified across two focus areas, namely:

#### **A. Promote and ensure the Southeast Asia region remains a Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone**

- 6.1. Ensure effective implementation of the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) Treaty and its Plan of Action through specific work programmes/projects.
- 6.2. Explore the possibility of allowing individual Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) which are willing to sign and ratify the Protocol to the SEANWFZ Treaty without reservations and provide prior formal assurance of this commitment in writing to go ahead with the signing.

- 6.3. Continue engaging all the NWS, including those with reservations, and intensify efforts of all parties to resolve all outstanding issues for the signing and ratification of the Protocol to the SEANWFZ Treaty in accordance with the objectives and principles of the SEANWFZ Treaty.
- 6.4. Continue to submit the biennial SEANWFZ Resolution to the First Committee of the UN General Assembly.
- 6.5. Promote an enhanced role of the SEANWFZ and its States Parties in relevant multilateral fora and frameworks on non-proliferation and disarmament, including the Review Conferences of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.
- 6.6. Continue to promote awareness of nuclear weapon-free zones and enhance coordination and cooperation among existing nuclear weapon-free zones and Mongolia through the sharing of experiences and best practices.
- 6.7. Promote ASEAN participation and constructive role in the Conference of States Parties and Signatories of Treaties that Establish Nuclear Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia.

**B. Contribute to global efforts on non-proliferation, disarmament and peaceful uses of nuclear energy**

- 6.8. Enhance cooperation in nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, especially in addressing the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, with a view to strengthening international standards and norms in support of international efforts towards a nuclear weapon-free world.
- 6.9. Strengthen existing cooperation between the ASEAN Network of Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy (ASEANTOM) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and develop cooperation and partnerships with nuclear regulatory bodies of other regions and relevant international organisations to contribute to nuclear non-proliferation, maintaining international standards of nuclear safety and security, preventing nuclear-related accidents and protecting against nuclear terrorism.
- 6.10. Promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in compliance with the IAEA safety, security and safeguards standards.
- 6.11. Promote the adoption of and compliance with high standards of nuclear safety, security and safeguards, including standards developed by the IAEA to ensure peaceful uses of nuclear energy.



- 6.12. Continue the undertaking of joint research and development projects in civilian nuclear technology with international organisations, such as the IAEA, through workshops, seminars and exchange of experts.
- 6.13. Strengthen existing regional mechanisms, including the Network of ASEAN Chemical, Biological and Radiological Defence Experts, regional and international preparedness and cooperation against chemical, biological and radiological threats.
- 6.14. Strengthen ASEAN's coordination and cooperation on the implementation of the ASEAN Protocol for Preparedness and Response to a Nuclear or Radiological Emergency.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL 7**

An ASEAN with shared commitment to maintaining and promoting peace, security and stability in the region, as well as to the peaceful resolution of disputes, including full respect for legal and diplomatic processes, without resorting to the threat or use of force, in accordance with the universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

### **Objectives**

- To uphold international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS.
- To promote maritime security and maritime cooperation, through ASEAN and ASEAN-led mechanisms in accordance with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS, as well as other internationally-accepted maritime conventions and principles.
- To maintain and promote stability in the maritime sphere in Southeast Asia.
- To promote the South China Sea as a sea of peace, stability, prosperity and sustainable development.

### **Strategic Measures**

In pursuing Strategic Goal 7, the following Strategic Measures are identified across three focus areas, namely:

#### **A. Commit to the peaceful resolution of disputes**

- 7.1. Support the effective implementation of relevant international laws and conventions, including the 1982 UNCLOS.

- 7.2. Resolve disputes by peaceful means in accordance with international law.
- 7.3. Exercise self-restraint by all parties in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes and affect peace and stability including, among others, refraining from action of inhabiting on the presently uninhabited islands, reefs, shoals, cays, and other features.
- 7.4. Promote sharing of best practices and lessons learnt regarding maritime dispute settlement and maritime cooperation.

**B. Enhance maritime security and promote maritime cooperation to comprehensively address maritime issues**

- 7.5. Maintain and promote stability in the maritime sphere and enhance maritime cooperation in Southeast Asia, including maritime security, maritime safety, marine environmental protection, blue economy, and addressing new and emerging challenges, through relevant ASEAN-led mechanisms, in accordance with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS.
- 7.6. Strengthen existing maritime cooperation mechanisms including with relevant external parties, with a view to augmenting the capacity to combat illegal activities at sea.
- 7.7. Enhance coordination among ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and mechanisms on maritime cooperation, including through the ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF), to comprehensively address maritime issues.
- 7.8. Continue the triennial publication of the ASEAN Maritime Outlook (AMO).
- 7.9. Expand ASEAN maritime cooperation to effectively combat transnational crimes and emerging challenges through concrete and practical activities.
- 7.10. Promote dialogue and cooperation among maritime law enforcement agencies such as coast guards and other relevant agencies.
- 7.11. Strengthen and expand capacity building activities of maritime law enforcement agencies in the region, including through the engagement with Dialogue Partners and other relevant external parties under the appropriate ASEAN-led mechanisms.
- 7.12. Strengthen the role of the AMF as, among others, a forum to foster maritime cooperation through constructive dialogues and consultations on maritime issues of common interest and concern.

- 7.13. Strengthen the role of the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF) as, among others, a Track 1.5 venue for ASEAN to engage its stakeholders, Dialogue Partners, and other external parties in dialogue on important maritime issues, while ensuring ASEAN Centrality.
- 7.14. Promote cooperative activities among parties concerned on marine environmental protection, marine scientific research and other agreed activities.
- 7.15. Strengthen ASEAN cooperation in enhancing maritime domain awareness and its increased impact on security, safety, economy and environment of the region.
- 7.16. Enhance cooperation among ASEAN Member States and with relevant external parties in ensuring safety of navigation and overflight in the region, including through workshops and seminars to share experiences and best practices.
- 7.17. Enhance dialogue and cooperation with relevant international organisations, such as the UN, the International Maritime Organization and the International Labour Organization to ensure the effective implementation of conventions and instruments related to maritime cooperation, including, but not limited to, safety of life at sea, the welfare of seafarers, and prevention of pollution from ships.
- 7.18. Maintain hotlines of communication among relevant agencies in ASEAN Member States to manage incidents and emergency situations at sea and prevent the escalation of potential conflicts.

**C. Maintain and promote the South China Sea as a sea of peace, stability, prosperity and sustainable development**

- 7.19. Intensify dialogue and consultation between ASEAN and China on matters pertaining to the South China Sea.
- 7.20. Enhance close consultation among ASEAN Member States on matters pertaining to the South China Sea including *Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea* (DOC) and the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC).
- 7.21. Ensure the full and effective implementation of the DOC in its entirety, including the effective monitoring and assessment of its implementation.
- 7.22. Pursue further confidence-building and preventive diplomacy measures in the South China Sea to prevent incidents such as unplanned encounters at sea.

- 7.23. Maintain and promote an environment conducive to the COC negotiations, including through practical measures that could reduce tensions and risk of accidents, misunderstandings, and miscalculation.
- 7.24. Intensify negotiations between ASEAN and China for the early conclusion of an effective and substantive COC that is in accordance with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS, and ensure its full and effective implementation.
- 7.25. Undertake joint cooperative activities, measures and projects as provided for in the DOC based on consensus among parties concerned, so as to promote mutual trust and confidence.
- 7.26. Ensure freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea in accordance with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL 8**

A Community that pursues the implementation of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) through concrete projects and activities.

### **Objective**

- To sustain and further reinforce ASEAN Centrality in the evolving regional architecture through ASEAN-led mechanisms by enhancing synergy among them, as well as deepening and strengthening existing partnerships to engage in win-win cooperation, fostering strategic trust, including through the implementation of the AOIP, and bringing current partnerships to a higher level of cooperation.

### **Strategic Measures**

In pursuing Strategic Goal 8, the following Strategic Measures are identified:

- 8.1. Promote and mainstream the implementation of the AOIP through concrete and practical projects and activities.
- 8.2. Encourage the continuation of platforms such as the ASEAN Indo-Pacific Forum for dialogue and consultation on the four areas of cooperation under the AOIP, namely maritime cooperation, connectivity, UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030, as well as economic and other possible areas of cooperation.
- 8.3. Encourage ASEAN external partners' continued support for the objectives and principles of the AOIP and to undertake practical and

concrete cooperation on the four priority areas of the AOIP through existing ASEAN-led mechanisms, such as but not limited to the EAS and ARF.

- 8.4. Leverage existing partnerships and explore cooperation with other interested parties to implement the AOIP.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL 9**

An inclusive and cohesive Community that respects political, social, religious, cultural, ethnic diversities, which upholds the principles of democracy, rule of law and good governance, and respects fundamental freedoms, promotes and protects human rights, and promotes social justice.

### **Objective**

- To ensure peace, dignity, security, justice and prosperity for the peoples of ASEAN through the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the participation and empowerment of women and youth in decision-making processes.

### **Strategic Measures**

In pursuing Strategic Goal 9, the following Strategic Measures are identified across three focus areas, namely:

#### **A. Promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms**

- 9.1 Strengthen the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms to ensure the peoples of ASEAN live with dignity, in peace, harmony and prosperity.
- 9.2 Uphold principles of impartiality, objectivity, non-selectivity, non-discrimination, non-confrontation, and avoidance of double standards and politicisation, with due regard to people's participation, inclusivity, and the need for accountability, in the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms for the benefit of the peoples of ASEAN.
- 9.3 Promote the mainstreaming of human rights across the three pillars of the ASEAN Community, through consultation among ASEAN organs, relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies, Entities and other relevant stakeholders with a focus on women, children, youth, the elderly, persons with disability, migrant workers as well as vulnerable and marginalised groups in the region.

- 9.4 Convene a regular ASEAN Human Rights Dialogue, in which a Member State chairing ASEAN may consider holding it, to serve as a form of cooperative forum for dialogue on human rights thematic issues of ASEAN Member States to share human rights progress and challenges, with a view to enhancing cooperation for the promotion and protection of human rights.
- 9.5 Support the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) in the discharge of its mandate, in accordance with its Terms of Reference (TOR).

**B. Good governance and culture of integrity**

- 9.6 Mainstream the principles and culture of good governance into the policies and practices of the ASEAN Community.
- 9.7 Promote activities and programmes to strengthen the culture of peace, *inter alia*, respect for diversity, promotion of tolerance and understanding of faith, religion and culture, including through conducting a series of cross-cultural religious literacy programmes, public awareness-raising, stakeholder engagement and dialogue.
- 9.8 Promote tolerance and moderation to bridge differences, defuse tensions, resolve disputes and counter violent extremism in all its forms and manifestations.
- 9.9 Enhance technical cooperation, including outreach programmes and cross-cultural dialogue, with the UN and relevant regional organisations, where feasible, to exchange expertise and experiences in promoting tolerance and moderation, and in other areas of mutual interest and concern.
- 9.10 Intensify meaningful and constructive engagement with Entities associated with ASEAN and relevant stakeholders in an effort to contribute to the ASEAN Political-Security Community-building process.
- 9.11 Strengthen the implementation of domestic laws and regulations against corruption and of anti-corruption practices in both the public and private sectors within ASEAN, including through capacity-building programmes.
- 9.12 Promote the sharing of experiences, best practices and exchange of views on ethics, values and the culture of integrity to strengthen anti-corruption activities.
- 9.13 Promote ASEAN cooperation to prevent and combat corruption, among others, by utilising relevant bilateral and regional instruments such as

the *Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation for Preventing and Combating Corruption* and MLAT.

### **C. Empower women and youth in decision-making**

- 9.14 Empower women and youth to enhance their capacity to contribute effectively in ASEAN Community-building efforts.
- 9.15 Enhance a support mechanism for ASEAN women peacekeepers through the establishment of a network of ASEAN women peacekeepers in alignment with the Women, Peace and Security Agenda.

## **III. INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING**

A Community that is anchored on ASEAN Centrality with enhanced institutional capacity and effectiveness, with ASEAN organs, bodies and mechanisms that are more decisive, responsive and timely as well as future-ready in addressing global and regional challenges, supported by a strengthened ASEAN Secretariat, with effective cross-sectoral and cross-pillar coordination, and sufficient ASEAN funding towards realising the ASEAN Community Vision 2045.

### **Objectives**

- To invest in and improve ASEAN's institutional capacity and effectiveness to support the agenda of ASEAN Community-building.
- To facilitate and coordinate cooperation, as well as develop innovative approaches to address cross-pillar and cross-sectoral issues.
- To support efforts in strengthening the ASEAN Secretariat and enhance its capabilities.
- To mobilise resources from internal and external sources to ensure sufficient and sustainable funding for the work of ASEAN, including ASEAN bodies, organs and mechanisms, and the ASEAN Secretariat, and to streamline work processes by reducing duplication and overlap.

### **Strategic Measures**

In pursuing the goal and these objectives, the following Strategic Measures are identified across six focus areas, namely:

#### **A. Enhance ASEAN's institutional capacity and effectiveness**

- i. Continue to strengthen ASEAN's institutional capacity and effectiveness

in accordance with the ASEAN Charter, including through strengthening ASEAN's decision-making process, organs, bodies and mechanisms; strengthening the role of ASEAN National Secretariats; and ensuring the sufficiency of resources to support the ASEAN Community-building agenda.

- ii. Operationalise the *Rules of Procedure to Support Decision-Making Process at the ASEAN Summit* to support efficient and effective decision-making process in relation to (i) a serious breach of the ASEAN Charter or non-compliance; (ii) addressing emergency situations affecting ASEAN by taking appropriate action; and (iii) where consensus cannot be achieved, the ASEAN Summit may decide on how a specific decision can be made.
- iii. Continue to support Timor-Leste's capacity-building efforts to facilitate its fulfilment of the *Roadmap for Timor-Leste's Full Membership in ASEAN*.

## **B. Strengthen the Committee of Permanent Representatives of ASEAN**

- i. Encourage the participation of CPR members in meetings of ASEAN Community Councils to provide overarching views as well as to help coordinate ASEAN matters, especially on cross-pillar issues.
- ii. Strengthen the role of the CPR as stipulated in its TOR to coordinate the implementation of agreements and decisions of the ASEAN Summit, ASEAN Coordinating Council (ACC) and ASEAN Community Councils.
- iii. Support the CPR's active role in ensuring policy coherence and coordination across ASEAN Community Pillars, ASEAN sectoral meetings, as well as ASEAN bodies, in the overall implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and its Strategic Plans.

## **C. Enhance the role of the Secretary-General of ASEAN and the ASEAN Secretariat in accordance with Article 11 of the ASEAN Charter**

- i. Enable the Secretary-General of ASEAN to provide expert advice and recommendations from the office's vantage point covering all issues in ASEAN Community-building, as appropriate, on issues and challenges that are cross-cutting in nature, as well as lead on these issues, as mandated by and in consultation with ASEAN Member States.
- ii. Strengthen the role of the Secretary-General of ASEAN in advancing public diplomacy and actively engaging the media and conducting public outreach on ASEAN-agreed positions and policies for the purposes of



promoting greater awareness of the ASEAN identity and supporting ASEAN Community-building.

- iii. Enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the ASEAN Secretariat in supporting the work of ASEAN, including analysis and monitoring across pillars and sectors.
- iv. Enhance the capacity of the ASEAN Secretariat to coordinate and follow-up on cooperation within ASEAN-led mechanisms as well as with external partners.
- v. Ensure sufficient support, including but not limited to technical, financial, human resources, to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the meetings convened at the ASEAN Secretariat.

**D. Raise the sense of ownership of ASEAN among the peoples of ASEAN**

- i. Enhance ASEAN's visibility, inculcate and nurture a sense of ASEAN Identity, and increase the sense of ownership among the peoples of ASEAN, including through the establishment of Centres of Excellence or other ASEAN bodies across ASEAN Member States, and allow each ASEAN Member State to have a stake in the work of ASEAN while at the same time sharing the hosting cost and responsibilities.
- ii. Support ASEAN Studies Centres and ASEAN Studies Programmes in ASEAN Member States and facilitate their networking, as well as strengthen the ASEAN University Network (AUN) to enhance awareness on ASEAN Identity among the peoples of ASEAN as well as the international community.
- iii. Explore engagement between ASEAN and the ASEAN Governors and Mayors Forum towards leveraging the support of local governments in promoting ASEAN awareness and identity among the peoples of ASEAN.

**E. Improve coordination on cross-pillar and cross-sectoral issues**

- i. Further explore modalities to strengthen coordination with the ASEAN Community Councils, including enhancing the use of existing modalities of coordination, to enhance policy coherence, efficiency and cooperation among them, in accordance with Article 8 (2) (c) of the ASEAN Charter, particularly on cross-pillar and cross-sectoral issues.

- ii. Enhance the role of the APSC Council and its Chair through giving greater focus to substantive and strategic issues and to coordinate effectively with cross-sectoral and cross-pillar issues under its purview.
- iii. Encourage closer coordination and collaboration between ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and ASEAN-approved sub-regional cooperation frameworks to facilitate sub-regional development and to complement the comprehensive development of ASEAN.

**F. Mobilise resources to ensure sufficient and sustainable funding for the work of ASEAN**

- i. Mobilise resources from ASEAN Member States and external sources, in terms of, but not limited to, funding, expertise and capacity-building support to implement agreed measures.
- ii. Ensure transparency and accountability in the mobilisation, utilisation and management of external resources.

**IV. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW**

- 8. ASEAN will ensure the full and effective implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and the APSC Strategic Plan through relevant mechanisms, effective communication to all stakeholders as well as regular monitoring, periodic review and assessment.

**A. Implementation Mechanism**

- i. Align the agenda and priorities of APSC Sectoral Bodies and their respective sectoral work plans with the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and the APSC Strategic Plan;
- ii. Implement the APSC Strategic Plan at regional and national levels;
- iii. Strengthen coordination on cross-sectoral issues within the APSC and on cross-pillar issues among the three Pillars and ASEAN Connectivity by leveraging current mechanisms to coordinate cross-pillar issues as well as those that may be established as needed; and
- iv. Further enhance the coordinating roles of the ASEAN Coordinating Council (ACC), ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) Council, ASEAN Sectoral Ministerial Bodies, Coordinating Conference for the ASEAN Political-Security Community (ASCCO), Committee of

Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR) and the ASEAN Secretariat, for a seamless implementation of the APSC Strategic Plan.

## **B. Communication and Outreach**

- i. Undertake communication activities to facilitate the implementation of the APSC Strategic Plan both at the regional and national levels, including in line with the ASEAN Communication Master Plan III, with the following objectives:
  - Inform the public and relevant stakeholders of the progress of implementation of the APSC Strategic Plan and promote awareness as well as better understanding on the impact of the strategic measures outlined in the APSC Strategic Plan, thereby helping them understand the direct and indirect benefits and value of political-security cooperation; and
  - Cultivate support and enable relevant stakeholders to be involved in and contribute meaningfully to the implementation of the APSC Strategic Plan as well as generate feedback on its implementation.

## **C. Review**

- i. Review and evaluate the APSC Strategic Plan to ensure that the activities are responsive to the needs and priorities of ASEAN, taking into account the changing dynamics of the regional and global landscape;
- ii. With the APSC Strategic Plan having a timeframe of ten (10) years, review the plan mid-way into its implementation (in 2030) and undertake an end-of-term review in 2035. Periodic reviews of the Strategic Plan may also be conducted by the Coordinating Conference for ASEAN Political-Security Community (ASCCO);
- iii. Updates to the APSC Strategic Plan may be proposed by ASEAN Member States as a result of the above-mentioned reviews to ensure that the plan remains adaptive and responsive to the changing regional and global dynamics, with a view to further improving the implementation of the Strategic Plan, if necessary;
- iv. The results of the reviews and assessments shall be reported by the Secretary-General of ASEAN to the ASEAN Summit through the APSC Council and the ACC.

## List of Abbreviations

<b>ACC</b>	ASEAN Coordinating Council
<b>ACCT</b>	ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism
<b>ACTCs</b>	ASEAN Committees in Third Countries and International Organisations
<b>ACTIP</b>	ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children
<b>ADI</b>	ASEAN Direct Communications Infrastructure
<b>ADMM</b>	ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting
<b>ADMM-Plus</b>	ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus
<b>ADMM-Plus EWG</b>	ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus Experts' Working Group
<b>AI</b>	Artificial Intelligence
<b>AICHR</b>	ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights
<b>AIPA</b>	ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly
<b>ALA</b>	ASEAN Law Association
<b>ALAWMM</b>	ASEAN Law Ministers Meeting
<b>AMF</b>	ASEAN Maritime Forum
<b>AMMD</b>	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters
<b>AMMTC</b>	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime
<b>AMO</b>	ASEAN Maritime Outlook
<b>APCN</b>	ASEAN Peacekeeping Centres Network
<b>APSC</b>	ASEAN Political-Security Community
<b>APT</b>	ASEAN Plus Three
<b>AOIP</b>	ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific
<b>ARF</b>	ASEAN Regional Forum
<b>ARMAC</b>	ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center
<b>ASCCO</b>	Coordinating Conference for the ASEAN Political-Security Community
<b>ASEANTOM</b>	ASEAN Network of Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy
<b>ASPC</b>	ARF Security Policy Conference

<b>AUN</b>	ASEAN University Network
<b>BLO</b>	Border Liaison Offices
<b>CACJ</b>	Council of ASEAN Chief Justices
<b>CBM</b>	Confidence-building measure
<b>COC</b>	Code of Conduct in the South China Sea
<b>CPR</b>	Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN
<b>DOC</b>	Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea
<b>DOD</b>	Defence Officials' Dialogue
<b>EAMF</b>	Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum
<b>EAS</b>	East Asia Summit
<b>ERW</b>	Explosive Remnants of War
<b>IAEA</b>	International Atomic Energy Agency
<b>ICT</b>	Information and communication technology
<b>INTERPOL</b>	International Criminal Police Organization
<b>MLAT</b>	Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters
<b>NADI</b>	Network of ASEAN Defence and Security Institutions
<b>NWS</b>	Nuclear Weapon States
<b>PKO</b>	Peacekeeping Operation
<b>SASOP</b>	Standard Operating Procedure for Regional Standby Arrangements and Coordination of Joint Disaster Relief and Emergency Response Operations
<b>SEANWFZ</b>	Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone
<b>TAC</b>	Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia
<b>TIP</b>	Trafficking in Persons
<b>TOR</b>	Terms of Reference
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNCLOS</b>	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
<b>WPS Agenda</b>	Women, Peace and Security Agenda
<b>YPS Agenda</b>	Youth, Peace and Security Agenda





# **ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2030**





# **ASEAN Economic Community**

## **Strategic Plan 2026–2030**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

1. Since its launch in 2015, the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) has evolved into a highly integrated and cohesive economic community. Emerging as an attractive and competitive economic region, the AEC continues to foster an interconnected market for trade and investment that cultivates individuals' prosperity, promotes opportunities for businesses of all sizes, facilitates the narrowing of the development gap between and within ASEAN Member States and advances cooperation in diverse economic sectors. Together, these endeavours have set the foundations for the seamless movement of goods, services, investment, capital, and skilled labour within ASEAN, enhanced trade and production networks, and established a more unified market for firms and consumers.
2. Carrying on with business as usual will not suffice for this highly dynamic economic region. For ASEAN to become the fourth largest global economy by 2045, countries in the region will need to deepen their economic integration and enhance their agility to address multifaceted challenges. Equally important is ASEAN's ability to pursue meaningful initiatives and programmes to ensure the long-term resilience of its people, businesses, and societies. Looking ahead to 2045, ASEAN is committed to becoming a single and future-ready economy that is anchored on sustainable growth, empowered by advanced technologies, responsive to emerging opportunities, whilst ensuring that inclusivity and sustainability are mainstreamed across all dimensions of its economic integration endeavours.
3. Key megatrends will shape ASEAN's future economic integration, bringing both opportunities and challenges that demand decisive actions from the AEC. Five critical megatrends—geopolitical tensions, shifting trade flows, technological transformation, climate change impacts, and demographic shifts—will have profound and double-edged consequences. Geopolitical tensions may fragment markets and drain capital, but also open doors for ASEAN to forge novel partnerships. Shifts in global trade flows could unlock new opportunities in nascent sectors, while requiring strategic competitiveness. Technological transformation promises efficiency and industrialisation, yet it may displace labour and strain infrastructure. ASEAN's rich carbon sinks position the region well to tackle climate challenges, yet failure to act swiftly could pose significant risks

to people, infrastructure, and key commodities, undermining economic progress. Meanwhile, rising incomes will elevate living standards and expand ASEAN's middle class, but an ageing population may shrink the workforce and increase the need for robust social safety nets. Given AEC's strategic role in global supply chains, it is crucial to harness these opportunities while mitigating risks. Therefore, these megatrends have been factored into the vision for AEC's future – calling for deepened regional integration, broadened partnerships, adoption of emerging technologies, sustainability-driven initiatives, and inclusive economic participation to navigate complexities ahead.

4. Attaining ASEAN's longer term economic vision will require decisive action. The AEC will develop and implement strategic plans in five-year strategic planning cycles to organise efforts and keep work on track. This regular cadence will offer the flexibility to adapt and recalibrate Objectives and Strategic Measures as the world changes, including to account for unforeseen future challenges.
5. The AEC Strategic Plan 2026-2030 will implement the economic aspects of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 "Resilient, Innovative, Dynamic, and People-Centred ASEAN". In the first five-year cycle, the AEC Strategic Plan 2026-2030 outlines six (6) Strategic Goals, 44 Objectives and 192 Strategic Measures. To uphold the principles of accountability and transparency in the implementation of this Strategic Plan, performance measures and indicators will be identified to assess the outcome of each Objective as part of each five-year plan.
6. The AEC Strategic Plan 2026-2030 was developed with reference to other goals and objectives that are aligned with ASEAN's long-term ambitions. This includes ASEAN Member States' commitments towards the 2030 United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and existing ASEAN-led mechanisms to address current and future regional and global challenges and opportunities, including the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP).
7. The principle of inclusivity and people-centredness are both a goal of this Strategic Plan and a feature of its development process. Various stakeholders played a critical part in developing this document. AEC Sectoral Bodies deliberated on details throughout 2024, while multiple rounds of external consultations were convened with businesses, think-tanks and academia, civil society organisations (CSOs), and External Partners throughout 2023-2024. As the AEC will impact and contribute to the lives of people across ASEAN, a Public Survey for AEC Post-2025 Agenda was also undertaken, ensuring that the public in ten ASEAN

Member States and Timor-Leste, granted observer status in 2022, had a voice in developing this Strategic Plan.

## **II. HEADING TOWARDS THE FUTURE: STRATEGIC GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIC MEASURES FOR AEC 2030**

### **STRATEGIC GOAL 1**

#### **AN ACTION-ORIENTED COMMUNITY: Realising an integrated single market and production base with new sources of competitiveness**

Over the past decade, ASEAN has strengthened its economic integration. Intra-ASEAN trade has consistently accounted for a substantial share of ASEAN's economy, representing over one-fifth of ASEAN's total trade. ASEAN has also seen increasing investment inflows to the region. Remarkably, services trade has surged in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, driven by a strong recovery in the manufacturing industry and accelerated digitalisation. There is a strong momentum to enhance and build the next phase of market integration in ASEAN.

In this vein, this Strategic Goal aims to realise an integrated single market, whilst seizing opportunities from new sources of competitiveness, including by taking into account technological innovation and a just and inclusive transition towards sustainable development. To attain this aspiration, eight Objectives will be advanced under this Strategic Goal, namely (a) bolster intra-ASEAN trade in goods; (b) strengthen regional services integration and competitiveness; (c) achieve ASEAN as an attractive investment destination; (d) deepen financial integration and inclusion; (e) facilitate mobility of businesses and people; (f) mobilise new sources of competitiveness; (g) enhance transparency, good governance, and good regulatory practices; as well as (h) advance the harmonisation of standards, technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures. Together, these efforts will shore up ASEAN's standing as a stable and vibrant integrated market, including by minimising barriers, harmonising regulation, enhancing ease of doing business, and reinforcing good governance across cross-border trade and investment activities.

#### **Objective 1.1. Bolster intra-ASEAN trade in goods**

To bolster trade in goods, ASEAN's trade initiatives will need to be modern, relevant, and fit-for-purpose in the 21<sup>st</sup> century environment, capable of addressing multifaceted challenges facing the region's trade ecosystems. Bolstering intra-ASEAN trade in goods will require successfully integrating emerging and advanced technologies into regional trade networks while strategically revisiting competitive sectors. This includes embracing trade-

related new and emerging issues (NEIs), advancing sustainable development objectives such as environmental sustainability, supporting the expanding number of MSMEs, and harnessing rapid technological transformation. ASEAN will bolster intra-ASEAN trade in goods which will strengthen regional procedures and practices in minimising negative impacts of barrier elements in non-tariff measures, enhance the use of available mechanisms to resolve trade disputes, and intensify efforts to enhance efficiency of customs processes across the region.

## **Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 1.1.1. Enhance intra-ASEAN trade through timely and effective implementation of the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA) and its subsequent upgrades, taking into account new and emerging issues (NEIs) relevant to post-2025 environment.
- 1.1.2. Strengthen trade facilitation by enhancing transparency mechanisms, procedures, and practices, as well as minimising the negative impacts of the barrier elements in non-tariff measures.
- 1.1.3. Enhance the utilisation of available mechanisms in the upgraded ATIGA to resolve trade disputes among ASEAN Member States in a timely manner.
- 1.1.4. Enhance intra-ASEAN trade by leveraging ASEAN's innovation and supporting sustainability agenda.
- 1.1.5. Ensure consistent and harmonised classification of commodities to facilitate the smooth flow of goods in the region.
- 1.1.6. Adopt relevant international best practices on trade facilitation and customs.
- 1.1.7. Enhance the efficiency of customs processes through strengthening of existing customs initiatives and optimising the use of modern technologies.
- 1.1.8. Optimise the benefits and effectiveness of regional trade facilitation measures for AEC stakeholders.
- 1.1.9. Strategically cultivate new sectors to invigorate intra-ASEAN trade landscape.

## **Objective 1.2. Strengthen regional services integration and competitiveness**

This Objective seeks to strengthen services integration and competitiveness in ASEAN, building upon the implementation of the ASEAN Trade in Services Agreement (ATISA) and ASEAN Services Facilitation Framework (ASFF) which are paramount to enhancing the region's competitiveness. These will provide an effective basis for ASEAN to negotiate services commitments with trading partners that foster a favourable policy environment for the seamless movement of professionals and cross-border services that create more opportunities for ASEAN nationals, stimulate investment flows, foster innovation, and enhance productivity within the region. Looking towards the future, ASEAN will need to continue unlocking the potential of the services sector through adapting new and emerging trends such as technological transformation, sustainability, and the growing care economy.

### **Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 1.2.1. Facilitate effective implementation of ASEAN Trade in Services Agreement (ATISA).
- 1.2.2. Work towards adopting high-quality services commitments across existing and new FTAs that can facilitate ASEAN's global engagement on trade in services.
- 1.2.3. Enhance the region's services sectors' competitiveness, including in new and emerging sectors.
- 1.2.4. Implement the ASEAN Services Facilitation Framework (ASFF).

## **Objective 1.3. Achieve ASEAN as an attractive investment destination**

Leveraging on its vast economic potential, ASEAN will strive to be an attractive and globally competitive investment destination. This approach will be underpinned by the implementation of existing ASEAN investment instruments and leveraging ASEAN's potential in unlocking opportunities from emerging megatrends, including technological innovation and sustainable development. Doing so will reinforce the region's distinctive appeal to global investors. During the implementation of the *AEC Blueprint 2025*, more than 90 per cent of 133 investment-related measures across ASEAN Member States were found to

be favourable to investors, exceeding both global average of 77 per cent and developing country average of 89 per cent.<sup>1</sup>

Building upon these successes, ASEAN commits to ensure effective implementation of its investment-related initiatives, such as the ASEAN Comprehensive Investment Agreement (ACIA) and the ASEAN Investment Facilitation Framework (AIFF). This will enable ASEAN to enhance and retain its position as one of the best investment destinations worldwide which will in turn sustain economic development in the region and improve the well-being of the people of ASEAN.

## **Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 1.3.1. Ensure effective and broader implementation of ASEAN's investment liberalisation initiatives.
- 1.3.2. Uphold the protection of investors and their investments in ASEAN.
- 1.3.3. Upgrade and consolidate ASEAN's investment promotion efforts.
- 1.3.4. Continuously enhance investment facilitation and ease of doing business in ASEAN Member States.
- 1.3.5. Promote the mainstreaming of corporate accountability instruments in ASEAN.
- 1.3.6. Establish a rigorous and comprehensive strategies in advancing capital market within ASEAN.

## **Objective 1.4. Deepen financial integration and inclusion**

ASEAN will further efforts on intentionally deepening financial integration and inclusion across the region. This includes strengthening financial services liberalisation, facilitating freer capital flows through improved market access, enhancing payment connectivity to support trade and investment activities across the region, and expanding financial inclusion for wider communities. ASEAN will also promote the use of local currencies to reduce the region's vulnerability to exchange rate fluctuations and external economic and financial shocks, and to lower transaction costs associated with cross-border payments.

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<sup>1</sup> ASEAN and UNCTAD, *ASEAN Investment Report 2024* (2024), accessible via <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/AIR2024-3.pdf>. The investment measures under the AEC Blueprint 2025 referenced in this context were implemented between 2016 and 2023.

## Strategic Measures

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 1.4.1. Intensify financial integration via further financial services liberalisation, regional cooperation, enhancements to regulatory coherence, and adoption of relevant global best practices.
- 1.4.2. Further liberalise the capital account to facilitate seamless cross-border investment and financing.
- 1.4.3. Expand and strengthen regional payment connectivity and promote local currency settlement.
- 1.4.4. Further expand financial inclusion to reach the wider communities that are underserved, including unbanked and un-insured populations.
- 1.4.5. Advance seamless financial markets connectivity.

## Objective 1.5. Facilitate mobility of businesses and people

Regional mobility is central to services liberalisation in ASEAN. The region has made significant strides in increasing mobility through the ASEAN Agreement on Movement of Natural Persons, which facilitates the mobility of businesses and people across the region. ASEAN will continue its commitment to streamlining processes and reducing barriers to facilitate seamless movement of businesses and people across ASEAN Member States. ASEAN will continue to enhance mobility and improve the employment potential of professionals and talent in the region, including by developing plans to further refine and expand agreements to foster greater ease of travel, promote cross-cultural exchanges, and bolster the socio-economic ties binding the ASEAN community. These efforts will unlock the full potential of human capital and contribute to the dynamism and interconnectedness of the region.

## Strategic Measures

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 1.5.1. Develop and implement schemes and initiatives that facilitate mobility of natural persons in the region.
- 1.5.2. Leverage the ASEAN Agreement on the Movement of Natural Persons (MNP) to facilitate talent mobility in the region.

- 1.5.3. Facilitate professionals' mobility in the region, for sectors with high potential and strong demand for specific experts.
- 1.5.4. Review existing mobility-related agreements and initiatives and their implementation and consider developing new Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs) in sectors with high value-added potentials.

### **Objective 1.6. Mobilise new sources of competitiveness**

Mobilising new sources of competitiveness is crucial for ensuring the relevance of ASEAN's integration in the regional and global market. ASEAN is committed to move beyond traditional sectors and harness the region's potential by boosting trade and investment opportunities in promising industries and sectors such as health, care services, and advanced manufacturing.

#### **Strategic Measure**

The Strategic Measure included under this Objective is:

- 1.6.1. Promote the potentials of nascent strategic sectors to elevate ASEAN's growth potentials.

### **Objective 1.7. Enhance transparency, good governance, and good regulatory practices**

Transparency, good governance, and sound regulatory practices are critical foundations for ASEAN's economic integration. These factors foster an environment of trust, whilst facilitating effective collaboration among ASEAN Member States. Good governance will ensure that policies are implemented efficiently, reducing bureaucratic bottlenecks, and enhancing the ease of doing business across ASEAN. Sound regulatory practices provide stability and predictability for businesses, which is crucial for attracting investments and sustaining economic growth. Efforts under this Objective seek to enhance transparency, good governance, and good regulatory practices by mainstreaming these principles across the implementation of AEC's initiatives.

#### **Strategic Measure**

The Strategic Measure under this Objective is:

- 1.7.1. Mainstream transparency, good governance, and good regulatory practice across all streams of AEC initiatives.



### **Objective 1.8. Advance the harmonisation of standards, technical regulations, and conformity assessment procedures**

Standardisation serves as a basis for market integration and technological development within ASEAN. Harmonising standards with international benchmarks ensures interoperability, facilitates trade, enables removal of technical barriers to trade, and fosters competitiveness. Harmonising standards that support sustainability enables the region to advance the sustainable development agenda, promote eco-friendly practices, achieve resource efficiency, and drive the adoption of renewable technologies. This will facilitate a transition towards a more sustainable and resilient future. Adopting standards with cutting-edge technologies will enable ASEAN to harness the full potential of digitalisation, automation, and emerging technologies.

The benefits of standards are maximised when implemented through competent conformity assessments and when technical regulations are based on good regulatory practices. Through the adoption of international standards<sup>2</sup> and other standards with innovative region-specific requirements, ASEAN can nurture a culture of innovation that enables economic, industrial, and social development.

### **Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 1.8.1. Strengthen and expedite joint ASEAN approaches on standards harmonisation efforts towards alignment with international standards and explore the development of ASEAN standards.
- 1.8.2. Expand standards and conformance initiatives to facilitate development in nascent sectors aiming to reinforce connectivity and integration through technological advancement and sustainable development.
- 1.8.3. Develop review mechanism to ensure the effectiveness and utilisation of ASEAN standards and conformance instruments.
- 1.8.4. Strengthen mutual recognition of conformity assessment results in ASEAN.
- 1.8.5. Strengthen joint ASEAN approaches on issues related to standards and conformance for effective representation and participation in international and regional bodies and associated recognition arrangements.

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<sup>2</sup> This refers to the provisions of the ASEAN Guidelines for Harmonisation of Standards that provides the use of standards of ASEAN Member States' and other standards in the event of non-availability of appropriate international standards.

## STRATEGIC GOAL 2

### **A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY: Engendering and mainstreaming climate-responsive elements and policies in all dimensions**

During the implementation of the *AEC Blueprint 2025*, sustainable economic development was given a renewed emphasis. As ASEAN recovered from the COVID-19 pandemic, two important documents were adopted, namely the *Framework for Circular Economy for the ASEAN Economic Community* and the *ASEAN Strategy for Carbon Neutrality*. These documents provide guidance for the region to mitigate ASEAN's vulnerability from the impacts of climate change. Carbon dioxide contributes to 77 per cent of ASEAN's greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions and successful decarbonisation is expected to add up to USD 1.0 trillion for the region's economies, attract up to USD 1.1 trillion in green finance, as well as contribute to the creation of up to 12 million jobs by 2030.<sup>3</sup>

In this context, putting a focus on sustainability in the AEC Strategic Plan 2026-2030 is both timely and essential for sustainable growth. This Strategic Goal is focused on realising a Sustainable Community by engendering and mainstreaming climate-responsive elements and policies in all dimensions. It is intended to unlock economic opportunities as ASEAN facilitates a just, inclusive, orderly, and sustainable transition at the regional level. This transition will build upon synergies to attract foreign investments in the development of green industries, embed globally credible standards, and unlock regional green capabilities.

Ultimately, this Strategic Goal will be attained by 10 Objectives, namely: (a) build a supportive ecosystem to unlock green economy potential, enhance resilience via climate adaptation, and accelerate the decarbonisation of regional supply chains; (b) intensify just and inclusive energy transition; (c) pursue sustainable development of extractive industries; (d) promote sustainable agriculture practices and forest management; (e) facilitate sustainable and inclusive tourism; (f) leverage sustainable finance and investment; (g) advance cooperation on blue economy relevant to the AEC as a new engine of inclusive and sustainable economic growth; (h) engender awareness and capacitate ASEAN businesses, regulators, financial institutions, and policymakers towards green transition; (i) pursue energy security, affordability, and sustainability; as well as (j) promote sustainable and smart mobility. Comprehensive efforts across these Objectives will secure sustainable, resilient, and inclusive economic integration.

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<sup>3</sup> BCG analysis in *ASEAN Strategy on Carbon Neutrality* (2023).

## **Objective 2.1. Build a supportive ecosystem to unlock green economy potential, enhance resilience via climate adaptation, and accelerate the decarbonisation of regional supply chains**

Through the adoption of the *Framework for Circular Economy for the ASEAN Economic Community* (AEC) and the *ASEAN Strategy for Carbon Neutrality*, ASEAN recognised the significance of a holistic approach tailored to the region's unique context and needs to chart sustainable economic growth. As part of a global sustainable transition, decarbonisation at the regional level represents a critical pathway toward achieving carbon neutrality, enabling the realisation of future climate goals. At the same time, ASEAN's commitment to circular economy practices—by promoting sustainable production, consumption, and recycling practices—will reduce the carbon footprint of regional industries and support the transition towards a low-carbon future. Achieving these ambitions will require systemic efforts to create a supportive ecosystem, including robust mechanisms to track greenhouse gas emissions, expanded access to financing for green projects, and strengthened policy frameworks.

ASEAN will further advance its sustainable ambitions by building a supportive ecosystem to unlock the potential of the green economy, enhance resilience via climate adaptation, and accelerate the decarbonisation of regional supply chains, without being limited to carbon dioxide. By doing so, ASEAN not only contributes to attaining environmental goals, but also positions itself as a competitive hub for green industries, catalysing resilient and inclusive supply chains that are aligned with global sustainability standards.

### **Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 2.1.1. Develop practical and strategic approach to monitor greenhouse gas emission in energy, agriculture, forestry, and land use sectors.
- 2.1.2. Enable key ASEAN stakeholders through awareness programme and best practice sharing on accelerating regional circular economy supply chain.
- 2.1.3. Promote consumer confidence in sustainable consumption practices.
- 2.1.4. Promote common recognition and interoperability amongst carbon markets in ASEAN.
- 2.1.5. Increase regional provision of green services.

## **Objective 2.2. Intensify just and inclusive energy transition**

Building on past and present efforts to improve energy connectivity and market integration for security, accessibility, affordability, and sustainability, this Objective focuses on intensifying a just and inclusive energy transition. The concept of a just energy transition is aligned with the aspiration of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals to ensure no one is left behind in the transition to low-carbon and sustainable economies, including in the implementation of efforts in energy transition.

ASEAN's energy intensity reduction stood at 24.5 per cent in 2022 – still progressing towards the 32 per cent target set for 2025. There are significant opportunities to reduce energy consumption and improve efficiency across all sectors. Similarly, with 15.6 per cent renewable energy (RE) share in total primary energy supply (TPES) in 2022, ASEAN will aim to expand the share of renewable energy within the ASEAN energy mix.<sup>4</sup>

### **Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 2.2.1. Promote energy efficiency and conservation to achieve significant reductions in energy intensity.
- 2.2.2. Encourage the growth of renewable energy (RE) within the ASEAN energy mix, including increasing the share of RE in installed power capacity.
- 2.2.3. Optimise the role of decarbonisation technologies in facilitating the transition towards sustainable and lower emission.
- 2.2.4. Foster the development and deployment of carbon capture, utilisation, and storage (CCUS) projects.

## **Objective 2.3. Pursue sustainable development of extractive industries**

ASEAN is committed to fostering sustainable minerals development. This commitment is underpinned by the principles of good governance, proper environmental stewardship, social responsibility, economic value, and commercial viability. By implementing transparent governance frameworks, promoting leading practices in mining operations, and embracing innovation in sustainable technologies, ASEAN aims to position itself as a destination for sustainable minerals development, and as a regional hub for minerals trade.

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<sup>4</sup> ASEAN Centre for Energy, *ASEAN Energy Outlook 8: 2023–2050* (2024), accessible via <https://aseanenergy.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/8th-ASEAN-Energy-Outlook.pdf>.

Recognising the importance of responsible resource management, ASEAN strives to ensure the long-term health of ecosystems and communities while developing extractive industries that are conducive to attracting investment.

## **Strategic Measure**

The Strategic Measure included under this Objective is:

- 2.3.1. Advance comprehensive and progressive implementation of sustainable minerals development principles and leading practices across ASEAN Member States to progressively improve governance and economic, social, and environmental outcomes.

## **Objective 2.4. Promote sustainable agriculture practices and forest management**

In the coming decades, ASEAN will face challenges such as increased population, rapid urbanisation, and climate change. By 2030, 70.0 per cent of ASEAN's population will reach middle-income status,<sup>5</sup> whilst 52.9 per cent of ASEAN's population will reside in urban areas.<sup>6</sup> ASEAN will need to ensure the continued supply of food for its population amidst dwindling availability of lands for agriculture and forestry use.

To do so, ASEAN will focus on promoting sustainable agricultural practices and forest management where the use of land is intensified sustainably for agricultural and forestry practices, producing more food using the same land area. Efforts such as organic farming, water conservation, and crop rotation can be pursued to boost the region's agricultural productivity. Embracing these practices not only fosters economic resilience but also promotes social equity by ensuring access to nutritious food for all.

## **Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 2.4.1. Implement sustainable agricultural approaches based on Good Agricultural Practices, Good Aquaculture Practices, and Good Animal Husbandry Practices.

<sup>5</sup> Boston Consulting Group, *Final Report: AEC Post-2025 Study: Towards AEC 2045: Options and Potentials for the AEC 2045* (2024).

<sup>6</sup> Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI), *Towards A Borderless Community* (2014), accessible via <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/159312/adbi-asean-2030-borderless-economic-community.pdf>.

- 2.4.2. Optimise new and appropriate technologies, best practices, and management systems to ensure food safety and address health/disease and environmental issues, particularly in the fast-growing food, agriculture, and forestry sector.
- 2.4.3. Minimise negative effects of agriculture activities on natural resources such as soil, forest, and water to ensure sustainability.
- 2.4.4. Enhance implementation of sustainable forest management practices to safeguard natural ecosystem and livelihood.
- 2.4.5. Enhance processes, productivity, and technology to ensure safety, quality, and compliance with global market standards on food, agriculture, and forestry.
- 2.4.6. Enhance cooperation in the production and promotion of halal food and products.

## **Objective 2.5. Facilitate sustainable and inclusive tourism**

ASEAN will implement efforts to facilitate sustainable and inclusive tourism practices while mitigating the negative impacts of mass tourism on local communities and ecosystems. This aligns with emerging travel trends where tourists seek to contribute to local and regional communities which has driven an increase in sustainable travel options from travel companies.<sup>7</sup>

ASEAN's commitment to sustainable and inclusive tourism has been renewed through the adoption of *ASEAN Framework on Sustainable Tourism Development* in 2023 and the *Action Roadmap for Sustainable Tourism Development* in 2024. These plans encourage the implementation of regional tourism practices that will realise sustainable economic growth, social inclusiveness, resource efficiency and environmental sustainability, cultural diversity and heritage protection, as well as resilience planning and adaptation.

## **Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 2.5.1. Accelerate adoption of sustainable practices in ASEAN tourism.
- 2.5.2. Develop a network of tourism corridors to promote the region's rich nature-based tourism sites.

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<sup>7</sup> Boston Consulting Group, Final Report: AEC Post-2025 Study: Towards AEC 2045: Options and Potentials for the AEC 2045 (2024).

## Objective 2.6. Leverage sustainable finance and investment

There is a strong global commitment towards advancing responsible business conduct, including by pooling investments that will support efforts in sustainable development. ASEAN will continue to focus attention on leveraging sustainable finance and investments. For instance, investors have a growing appetite to support sustainability efforts, including in the renewable energy supply chain. During 2020-2023, renewable energy-related industries attracted an average of more than USD 27 billion annually, equivalent to one-fourth of total announced greenfield investment activities across the region.<sup>8</sup>

Looking ahead, sustainable investment will be needed to ensure the region has adequate resources to engender and mainstream climate-responsive policies across all economic domains.

While the appetite for greenfield investment to support sustainable activities grew, international project finance deals for sectors relevant to sustainable development declined in 2023.<sup>9</sup> This presents opportunities for ASEAN to attract financing in sustainable sectors, supported by existing initiatives such as the ASEAN Taxonomy for Sustainable Finance and the Energy Transition Mechanism, as well as efforts to promote greater consistency, comparability, and reliability of corporate sustainability disclosures in ASEAN, including for MSMEs. These endeavours are pivotal in providing investors with the necessary information for their capital allocation decisions and to price sustainability-related risks. By integrating sustainable finance principles into long-term planning, ASEAN not only fosters economic resilience but also enhances its competitiveness on the global stage.

### Strategic Measures

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 2.6.1. Identify and address impediments and restrictions on investments into green sectors.
- 2.6.2. Enhance effective implementation of existing sustainable financing instruments.
- 2.6.3. Develop innovative financing mechanisms, financial solutions, and financial structures to support a just, affordable, credible, and orderly transition in the region.

<sup>8</sup> ASEAN and UNCTAD, *ASEAN Investment Report 2024* (2024), accessible via <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/AIR2024-3.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

- 2.6.4. Pursue regional collaboration to mainstream the adoption of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) standards.
- 2.6.5. Enhance financial commitments for decarbonisation and building climate resilience.

**Objective 2.7. Advance cooperation on blue economy relevant to the AEC as a new engine of inclusive and sustainable economic growth**

With the adoption of the *ASEAN Leaders Declaration on the Blue Economy* in 2021 and the *ASEAN Blue Economy Framework* in 2023 and the establishment of the ASEAN Coordinating Task Force on Blue Economy (ACTF-BE) in 2024, ASEAN has committed to advance cooperation in the blue economy relevant to the AEC as a new engine of inclusive and sustainable economic growth. To further this Objective, ASEAN will develop initiatives to facilitate the inclusive use, governance, management, and conservation of oceans, seas, freshwater, as well as marine and coastal resources for economic growth, strengthened by engagement and partnership with relevant stakeholders in the region. All activities in the oceans and seas, and action and cooperation in the marine sector, will be carried out in accordance with the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

**Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 2.7.1. Foster the creation of value-added and value-chain of resources from oceans, seas, and fresh water.
- 2.7.2. Advance practices that promote sustainable and inclusive development of the blue economy in ASEAN.
- 2.7.3. Enhance cooperation on combating illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing.
- 2.7.4. Promote collaboration on science, technology, and innovation on blue economy.
- 2.7.5. Ensure effective implementation of the economic aspects of the ASEAN Blue Economy Framework.



## **Objective 2.8. Engender awareness and capacitate ASEAN businesses, regulators, financial institutions, and policymakers towards green transition**

Businesses across ASEAN have contributed to the development of the region's sustainability-related frameworks, including the *ASEAN Strategy for Carbon Neutrality* in 2023. Building upon this consultative approach, this Objective aims to scale the impact of sustainability efforts by engendering awareness and building capacity amongst ASEAN businesses, regulators, financial institutions, and policymakers, to support a green transition.

### **Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 2.8.1. Enhance businesses' and financial institutions' capacity in mainstreaming green practices and sustainability in business operations.
- 2.8.2. Provide incentives and support mechanisms to facilitate businesses' and financial institutions' transition to green practices.
- 2.8.3. Encourage sharing of best practices for addressing climate risk and opportunities amongst regulators and policymakers.

## **Objective 2.9. Pursue energy security, affordability, and sustainability**

ASEAN's diverse economic sectors have thrived over the past decade amidst a period of stable and vibrant economic growth. Energy demand from these sectors will continue to rise. In the post-pandemic era, the total primary energy supply (TPES) increased, with rising dependency on fossil fuel imports. For instance, coal constitutes more than one-third of ASEAN's energy mix in 2022. By 2050, fossil fuels are projected to contribute heavily to the region's energy supply, although its share is expected to decline from 76.1 percent in 2022 to 63.4 percent as ASEAN Member States increasingly adopt alternative generation technologies, including expanded use of natural gas and renewable energy sources.<sup>10</sup>

The region will continue to face critical challenges to ensure energy security and to generate energy supply sustainably. ASEAN will continue its efforts to pursue energy security, affordability, and sustainability while sustaining its economic momentum.

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<sup>10</sup> ASEAN Centre for Energy, *ASEAN Energy Outlook 8: 2023–2050* (2024), accessible via <https://aseanenergy.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/8th-ASEAN-Energy-Outlook.pdf>. The 2050 projection scenario is based on AMS Targets Scenario (ATS).

## **Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 2.9.1. Promote favourable policies and frameworks to attract private sector investments that support energy diversification.
- 2.9.2. Deploy advanced, cleaner, and low carbon energy technology by incorporating option on civilian nuclear energy for energy diversification and supply stability.
- 2.9.3. Enhance partnerships between relevant stakeholders to accelerate innovation and the commercialisation of new energy technologies

## **Objective 2.10. Promote sustainable and smart mobility**

Promoting sustainable and smart mobility is crucial to addressing challenges posed by climate change and heightened urbanisation. By investing in sustainable transportation infrastructure and embracing smart mobility solutions, ASEAN can alleviate traffic congestion, reduce air pollution, and minimise transport industries' emissions. Initiatives such as promoting public transportation, integrating non-motorised transport options like cycling lanes, and implementing smart traffic management systems will contribute to more efficient and environmentally friendly urban mobility. Fostering regional cooperation and knowledge sharing on sustainable transportation practices can further accelerate progress towards a greener and more integrated ASEAN community, in line with the region's commitment to achieve carbon neutrality.

## **Strategic Measure**

The Strategic Measure under this Objective is:

- 2.10.1. Foster regional cooperation to bolster the adoption of sustainable and smart mobility solutions.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL 3**

**AN ENTERPRISING, BOLD, AND, INNOVATIVE COMMUNITY: Enhancing sectoral cooperation, attuned to emerging trends and developments**

Through the implementation of the *AEC Blueprint 2025*, integration in various economic sectors has been bolstered, evident in: connected transport networks in land, air, and sea, with strides toward sustainable transport; strengthened infrastructure and policies to promote ICT adoption; expanded e-commerce

transactions for cross-border trade, especially for MSMEs; more integrated and sustainable energy systems; robust cooperation in food, agriculture, and forestry; a more competitive and sustainable tourism sector; supportive conditions for healthcare cooperation; more matured minerals hub; as well as deployed innovative applications of science and technology across ASEAN.

Building upon the progress that ASEAN has achieved, this Strategic Goal aims to realise an enterprising, bold, and innovative ASEAN Community. To achieve this, ASEAN will enhance sectoral cooperation to tackle the challenges of the day through approaches that are knowledge-based, relevant, adaptable, and in line with emerging trends and developments. To implement this Strategic Goal, there are a total of 12 Objectives that will be pursued in the areas of: (a) digital and technology transformation, (b) innovation ecosystem, (c) competition, (d) consumer protection, (e) intellectual property, (f) creative economy, (g) transport, (h) quality tourism, (i) MSMEs integration, (j) minerals, (k) digital infrastructure, and (l) tax cooperation.

### **Objective 3.1. Accelerate digital and technology transformation**

ASEAN's future economic success hinges on its ability to capitalise on its strengths in digital and technological transformation. By 2024, the region's digital economy revenue is projected to reach USD 122 billion,<sup>11</sup> a tenfold increase from USD 12 billion revenue recorded in 2016.<sup>12</sup> This represents an opportunity to elevate the region's growth by harnessing digital and technology transformation. The global market for emerging technologies such as 5G, artificial intelligence, big data, and internet of things is projected to grow up 5.8 times to USD 8 trillion from USD 1.2 trillion in 2020.<sup>13</sup>

To harness the benefits of digitalisation, ASEAN will require focused strategies in areas like robust digital trade, seamless cross-border e-commerce, secure payments and e-invoicing, reliable digital identification and authentication, safe and protected cross-border data flows, strong online safety measures, robust cybersecurity efforts, fostering talent mobility, and embedding sustainability elements in digital transformation. This will be supported by efforts like the ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA) which is predicted to double the value of the digital economy to USD 2 trillion by 2030 upon its successful implementation.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Google, Temasek, and Bain & Company, *e-Conomy SEA 2024* (2024), accessible via [https://services.google.com/fh/files/misc/e\\_conomy\\_sea\\_2024\\_report.pdf](https://services.google.com/fh/files/misc/e_conomy_sea_2024_report.pdf).

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Boston Consulting Group (BCG) Analysis (2024). *Final Report of the AEC Post-2025 Study* (2024), based on UNCTAD, *Technology and Innovation Report* (2023), accessible via <https://unctad.org/tir2023>.

<sup>14</sup> ASEAN, *Study on the ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA)* (2023), accessible via [https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/ASEAN-Digital-Economy-Framework-Agreement-Public-Summary\\_Final-published-version-1.pdf](https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/ASEAN-Digital-Economy-Framework-Agreement-Public-Summary_Final-published-version-1.pdf).

ASEAN will accelerate digital and technology transformation by promoting a sustainable, open, interoperable, secure, and trusted digital space, serving as a basis to further champion the region as a digital economic community.

## **Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 3.1.1. Advance regional industrial potentials through enhanced coordination, intensified knowledge transfer, and seamless cross-border technology cooperation.
- 3.1.2. Propel cross-border paperless trade transaction through seamless exchange of electronic documents, including by expanding the volume and type of electronic documents accepted through ASEAN Single Window, as well as enhancing its technical interoperability with ASEAN partners.
- 3.1.3. Identify and address key obstacles to facilitate efficient cross-border paperless trade logistics across the region.
- 3.1.4. Develop initiatives to intensify information exchange among relevant stakeholders, including customs agencies, postal agencies, and private stakeholders to facilitate seamless cross-border digital trade.
- 3.1.5. Encourage the development of interoperable digital systems, including for e-invoicing, as well as digital identity and authentication.
- 3.1.6. Align regional practices with international norms to reduce barriers in relation to the adoption of appropriate technologies.
- 3.1.7. Catalyse start-up innovations through deepened regional cooperation.
- 3.1.8. Promote responsible digital growth through comprehensive regulations and enforcement that facilitate secure and seamless cross-border data flows, ensure data protection for business purposes, and strengthen online safety and cybersecurity.
- 3.1.9. Facilitate and advance digital talent mobility and talent-building.
- 3.1.10. Adopt and promote the principle of technology neutrality.
- 3.1.11. Enhance talent development on frontier technologies and innovation through upskilling and reskilling, including digital value chain and digital literacy.

- 3.1.12. Adopt and advance evidence-based and coordinated approach to govern artificial intelligence and facilitate adoption of big data and artificial intelligence.
- 3.1.13. Mainstream decarbonisation in digital and technology transformation.
- 3.1.14. Close the digital divide through affordability and inclusive access for technology and telecommunication solutions.
- 3.1.15. Address obstacles in e-commerce due to illicit trade through strengthened collaboration between government officials, private industries, and enforcement officials.
- 3.1.16. Advance the establishment of a regionally comparable and recognisable unique business identification number to allow seamless cross-border business transactions.

### **Objective 3.2. Advance innovation ecosystem**

ASEAN's efforts on science, technology, and innovation have been on the forefront of its economic cooperation agenda. Gross research and development (R&D) expenditure increased from USD 10.6 billion in 2002 to USD 54.9 billion in 2023. Six ASEAN Member States ranked in the top 55 in the Global Innovation Index amongst a total of 133 economies.<sup>15</sup> To build on these successes and position ASEAN at the forefront of global innovation, the region will need to increase momentum on innovation through strategic investments in research and development, nurture a culture of entrepreneurship, and leverage emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and blockchain.

ASEAN will advance its innovation ecosystem through cross-border partnerships, knowledge exchange, and a supportive regulatory environment. This will enable the region to unlock its full potential, empower its people, and position itself as a dynamic hub for innovation on the global stage.

### **Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 3.2.1. Boost ICT innovations and entrepreneurship and technological developments, including among others, on smart city and big data and analytics.

<sup>15</sup> WIPO (2024) *Global Innovation Index*, [https://www.wipo.int/web-publications/global-innovation-index-2024/assets/67729/2000%20Global%20Innovation%20Index%202024\\_WEB2.pdf](https://www.wipo.int/web-publications/global-innovation-index-2024/assets/67729/2000%20Global%20Innovation%20Index%202024_WEB2.pdf).

- 3.2.2. Promote sharing of knowledge, information, and best practices of employment strategies to ensure workers' competitiveness amidst the changing world of work.
- 3.2.3. Stimulate adoption and diffusion of innovation and technologies such as internet of things (IoT), big data and cloud-based technology, artificial intelligence, quantum technology, high-performance computing, virtual and augmented reality, additive manufacturing, and biotechnology.
- 3.2.4. Deploy science, technology, and innovation solutions to accelerate growth in key industries with transformative potentials such as in healthcare, circularity, and digital value chains.
- 3.2.5. Strengthen collaboration among academia, research institutions, networks of centres of excellence, and private sector to establish an effective ecosystem for capability development, technology transfer, and strategic commercialisation.
- 3.2.6. Enhance mobility of scientists and researchers from science and technology (S&T) institutions in the public and private sector.
- 3.2.7. Establish innovative support systems to promote and manage regional science, technology, and innovation enterprises arising from spin-offs and joint ventures.
- 3.2.8. Accelerate advancement in space technology through research and capacity development in geoinformatics, satellites, and other applications.

### **Objective 3.3. Foster fair markets in the region**

ASEAN will foster fair markets in the region to enable businesses to compete on a level playing field, within a transparent, equitable, and conducive ecosystem. Fostering fair markets not only promotes entrepreneurship and enhances innovation, but also attracts foreign investment, boosts intra-ASEAN trade, and improves the region's global competitiveness and resilience. This requires robust competition regimes and effective enforcement which will cultivate a competitive culture and achieve sustainable, inclusive, and resilient growth.

Fair competition benefits various stakeholders across ASEAN Member States, leading to lower prices and improved product quality. To effectively enforce competition laws, competition authorities in ASEAN must also cooperate and coordinate to instil trust and stability in regional markets. Strong national competition policies and laws are critical for creating a robust regional market, ensuring that competition principles are seamlessly integrated into regional and domestic economic policies.

## Strategic Measures

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 3.3.1. Strengthen national competition regimes.
- 3.3.2. Advance regional cooperation for effective enforcement and convergence of competition law and policy.
- 3.3.3. Cultivate a competition culture in the region.
- 3.3.4. Promote fair markets in ASEAN for sustainable, inclusive, and resilient growth.

### **Objective 3.4. Empower ASEAN's consumers and safeguard their welfare**

Empowering ASEAN's consumers and safeguarding their welfare will foster inclusive growth and sustainable development across the region. By prioritising consumer protection efforts, ASEAN will be able to foster a trusted business environment and ensure that consumers are equipped with the knowledge and resources to make informed choices. ASEAN's agenda for the next five years will reach beyond strengthening the consumer protection regimes of individual ASEAN Member States to advance cross-border coordination with the aim of enabling consumers across the region to exercise their rights and promoting business compliance.

## Strategic Measures

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 3.4.1. Strengthen national consumer protection regimes.
- 3.4.2. Establish regionally accepted standards of consumer protection.
- 3.4.3. Advance regional cross-border cooperation in consumer protection.
- 3.4.4. Nurture a culture of consumer empowerment through greater consumer awareness and wider adoption by businesses of fair practices.
- 3.4.5. Address consumer protection challenges arising from the digital age and other emerging trends.

### **Objective 3.5. Advance an effective, enterprising, and inclusive intellectual property (IP) ecosystem in the ASEAN region**

To propel the Intellectual Property (IP) Ecosystem in ASEAN forward, the *ASEAN Intellectual Property Rights Action Plan (AIPRAP) 2030* prioritises the following

core principles: effectiveness, enterprising, and inclusivity. ASEAN will focus on optimising efficiency, enforcement, and compliance; fostering innovation, entrepreneurship, and commercialisation; and ensuring inclusive accessibility and opportunities for all. This will empower ASEAN's diverse range of innovators, creators, businesses, MSMEs and underserved groups to thrive amidst the ever-evolving technological advancements and global emerging megatrends. The AIPRAP 2030 reaffirms ASEAN's collective long-term commitment and dedication to a balanced IP eco-system, elevating the region's innovation capabilities, fostering mutually beneficial technology transfer, attracting high-tech investments, and nurturing and retaining top talent.

To achieve this Objective, ASEAN will fortify and harmonise ASEAN's IP framework, spearhead knowledge-sharing and capacity-building initiatives, elevate the standard of IP service delivery, compliance and enforcement of IP rights reinforce IP enforcement mechanisms region-wide, cultivate a culture of respect for intellectual property rights among all generations in ASEAN, and foster entrepreneurship and innovation in the ASEAN region.

### **Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 3.5.1. Strengthen the effectiveness of National IPR Regimes to stimulate economic growth, enabling adaptation to new technological measures and emerging trends.
- 3.5.2. Harmonise regulatory frameworks and advance regional platforms and institutions in intellectual property rights (IPR).
- 3.5.3. Facilitate IP asset creation, management, and commercialisation for economic growth.
- 3.5.4. Foster ASEAN culture of respect for IP, compliance, and enforcement of IP rights.
- 3.5.5. Promote IP for sustainable and inclusive growth in ASEAN.

### **Objective 3.6. Harness the potential of creative economy**

Under this Objective, ASEAN will continue harnessing the potential of the creative economy to drive sustainable and inclusive growth. By leveraging the region's dynamic creative industries, ASEAN will stimulate innovation and enhance its global competitiveness. Through targeted policies and initiatives that support creative sectors such as arts, media, design, and digital content,



ASEAN will build a resilient and knowledge-based economy that benefits its people.

### **Strategic Measure**

The Strategic Measure under this Objective is:

3.6.1. Optimise the potentials of the creative economy in the region.

### **Objective 3.7. Invigorate ASEAN's transport integration and connectivity across air, maritime, and land sectors**

In the past decades, ASEAN has put in place regional frameworks and regulatory instruments (e.g., ASEAN Single Aviation Market, ASEAN Single Shipping Market, ASEAN Framework Agreement on Multimodal Transport) to ensure robust, seamless, and undisrupted connectivity across the region. ASEAN will continue to strengthen transport integration and connectivity across air, maritime, and land sectors, including by enhancing transport systems and strengthening policy coordination and coherence.

### **Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 3.7.1. Strengthen the ASEAN Single Aviation Market (ASAM) for greater connectivity within and beyond ASEAN, safer and more secure skies, and enhanced air traffic management efficiency.
- 3.7.2. Safeguard and elevate the quality of regional land transport network that is efficient, safe, and integrated within ASEAN and with neighbouring countries to support trade and tourism.
- 3.7.3. Advance the realisation of the ASEAN Single Shipping Market (ASSM).
- 3.7.4. Work towards an integrated, efficient, and globally competitive logistics and multimodal transportation system.

### **Objective 3.8. Reimagine and intensify quality tourism cooperation**

Tourism has long been a significant contributor to the ASEAN economy and is expected to continue growing, driven by an increasing middle-class population, greater connectivity and travel options, seamless cross-border payment options, and timely access to information on diverse travel options.

By 2030, ASEAN is expected to account for 10.3 per cent market share of global tourists, standing at 187 million tourist arrivals across the region.<sup>16</sup> To maintain the region's relevance to global and regional travellers, ASEAN will reimagine and intensify quality tourism cooperation. It will do so by increasing the competitiveness and resilience of the tourism sector, enhancing immersive experiences through digitalisation, and ensuring high-quality products and services are being delivered to tourists across the region.

## Strategic Measures

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 3.8.1. Enhance competitiveness of ASEAN as tourism destination.
- 3.8.2. Foster resiliency in tourism sector to withstand potential shocks and crises.
- 3.8.3. Optimise digital tourism to foster immersive travel experiences.
- 3.8.4. Enhance the value of regional tourism offerings by delivering high-quality products and services.

## **Objective 3.9. Advance inclusive, innovative, competitive business environment to strengthen MSMEs integration in the regional and global value chains**

Across ASEAN, micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) have been an important bedrock of economic growth. There are over 70 million MSMEs across the region, accounting for an impressive 97.2 to 99.9 per cent of all establishments, spread across industries, geographies, and communities. Collectively, MSMEs pack a powerful economic punch, contributing significantly to ASEAN's GDP—an estimated 44.8 per cent—and employing 85.0 per cent of ASEAN's workforce.<sup>17</sup> MSMEs' dynamism has fuelled local economies, fostered innovation, and brought prosperity to countless communities.

As ASEAN seeks to strengthen its position in regional and global value chains for its next phase of economic integration, it will need to boost MSMEs' productivity and ensure their access to diverse financial services options to enhance their competitiveness. At the same time, to promote inclusive growth, the needs of marginalised and vulnerable groups within the MSMEs sector

<sup>16</sup> UN World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), *Tourism Towards 2030* (2011) accessible via [https://www.globalwellnesssummit.com/wp-content/uploads/Industry-Research/Global/2011\\_UNWTO\\_Tourism\\_Towards\\_2030.pdf](https://www.globalwellnesssummit.com/wp-content/uploads/Industry-Research/Global/2011_UNWTO_Tourism_Towards_2030.pdf).

<sup>17</sup> ASEAN (2021) *ASEAN Strategic Action Plan for SME Development 2016-2025: 2020 KPI Monitoring Report*.

should be addressed. This includes providing support for micro enterprises, women-owned businesses, as well as those from rural communities.

ASEAN will adopt a multi-pronged approach to advance an inclusive, innovative, competitive business environment that strengthens MSMEs' integration into the regional and global value chains, by unlocking the potential of technology across all policy dimensions to empower MSMEs, bolstering policy and regulatory environment for MSMEs' development, investing in reskilling and upskilling initiatives, and fostering a supportive ecosystem to nurture collaboration and partnerships amongst stakeholders.

### **Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 3.9.1. Promote MSME productivity through capabilities to innovate and adopt enabling technologies, including greater participation in high-impact industries.
- 3.9.2. Promote MSME access to traditional and alternative finance through enhanced financial literacy and the use of digital technology.
- 3.9.3. Facilitate MSMEs' participation in the regional and global markets.
- 3.9.4. Promote MSME resilience and competitiveness through reskilling and upskilling initiatives.
- 3.9.5. Strengthen the policy and regulatory environment for MSMEs' development and growth.
- 3.9.6. Promote tailored programmes and incentives for micro businesses to value-add their exported products, leveraging from digitalisation and future technological advancement trends.
- 3.9.7. Strengthen the collaboration and partnership between private sector and knowledge communities to catalyse innovation and nurture entrepreneurship, such as creation of start-ups.

### **Objective 3.10. Expand upstream to downstream minerals and metals cooperation**

Inclusive and effective cooperation in both upstream and downstream minerals and metals investment, production, and trade requires a multifaceted approach. By implementing sound governance and actively promoting investment in exploration, extraction, and processing of minerals, ASEAN can

attract responsible capital, technology, and expertise to develop its mineral sector sustainably. Enhancing governance capacity through training and knowledge exchange will empower ASEAN Member States to adopt leading practices, increase investment, and enhance outcomes. Establishing robust research and data frameworks will provide critical insights into the region's mineral potential, facilitate informed decision-making, and foster collaboration among stakeholders.

### **Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 3.10.1. Strengthen trade and investment-related frameworks and strategies to boost domestic and international sustainable investments in all components of the minerals value chain across ASEAN Member States to build ASEAN's resource base, expand production and trade, and generate sustainable value for ASEAN Member States.
- 3.10.2. Strengthen human, institutional, and technical capacities in minerals governance, technologies, R&D, and innovation in the ASEAN minerals sector to facilitate increased investment; higher production, utilisation, and trade in minerals; and sustainable development outcomes.
- 3.10.3. Implement a robust knowledge management and data collection protocol for the ASEAN minerals information system to improve the quality and availability of minerals data and related information to promote investment and inform decision-making.

### **Objective 3.11. Strengthen digital infrastructure connectivity**

ASEAN will strengthen digital infrastructure and connectivity, including by expanding and upgrading broadband networks, fostering the development of data centres, and promoting the adoption of advanced digital technologies. By ensuring seamless, reliable, and inclusive digital connectivity, ASEAN will support innovation, facilitate efficient cross-border trade, and bridge the digital divide. This will create a more resilient and competitive digital economy.

### **Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 3.11.1. Establish secure and resilient digital infrastructure within ASEAN to promote adoption of advanced digital technologies.

### 3.11.2. Strengthen collaboration and partnership in digital infrastructure building and maintenance.

## **Objective 3.12. Strengthen tax cooperation**

ASEAN has made significant strides in enhancing tax cooperation, laying a foundation for more robust financial governance across the region. ASEAN aims to further fortify this collaborative approach to strengthening tax cooperation. Plans include knowledge-sharing on and implementation of tax policies consistent with internationally agreed standards, developing information exchange mechanisms, establishing ways to improve tax certainty, strengthening tax administrations, and undertaking joint enforcement initiatives amongst interested ASEAN Member States. By intensifying tax cooperation, ASEAN seeks to create a fair and transparent fiscal environment that fosters economic growth and resilience, deters tax evasion, and promotes sustainable development.

### **Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 3.12.1. Strategically address the issue of double taxation to support economic growth.
- 3.12.2. Enhance withholding tax structures to promote economic integration and the broadening of the investor base in ASEAN debt issuance.
- 3.12.3. Minimise tax avoidance and evasion to ensure fiscal health.
- 3.12.4. Promote best practices sharing on taxation reform strategy for digital economy.
- 3.12.5. Strengthen tax administrations.
- 3.12.6. Promote knowledge-sharing and implementation of tax policies consistent with internationally agreed standards.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL 4**

### **AN ADAPTABLE AND PRO-ACTIVE COMMUNITY: Strengthening Global ASEAN Agenda**

With the implementation of the *AEC Blueprint 2025*, ASEAN has reaffirmed its global standing with External Partners and regional and multilateral fora, and reinforced its critical role as part of global value chains (GVCs). With the

entry-into-force of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) in 2023, as well as ongoing efforts to upgrade ASEAN's internal and ASEAN+1 Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), ASEAN will ensure its economic agreements remain relevant and fit-for-purpose for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

ASEAN will build upon its successes to realise an adaptable and pro-active community through a strengthened Global ASEAN Agenda. The Objectives under this Strategic Goal will enhance ASEAN's economic cooperation with External Partners that leverage ASEAN's centrality and expand and elevate the quality of its partnerships and collaborations with Dialogue and External Partners, particularly by advancing free trade agreements and closer economic partnerships (CEP). Additionally, this Strategic Goal also strives to strengthen ASEAN's position in the global value chain. Equally important in advancing this Strategic Goal are efforts to ensure preparedness for future megatrends, which will require ASEAN to strengthen its global competitiveness.

#### **Objective 4.1. Enhance ASEAN's economic cooperation with External Partners**

ASEAN will enhance ASEAN's economic cooperation with External Partners by ensuring the region continues to strengthen ASEAN's trade architecture to ensure relevance and promoting economic integration, including through optimising existing free trade agreements (FTA) and comprehensive economic partnerships. This strategic approach will help ASEAN navigate global challenges, foster sustainable growth, and secure a competitive advantage in the global marketplace, ultimately contributing to the prosperity and resilience of the region.

#### **Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 4.1.1. Strategise and upgrade the existing ASEAN+1 FTAs to ensure they remain modern, comprehensive, forward-looking through the inclusion of new and emerging issues (NEIs) to these FTAs, such as but not limited to, digitising trade facilitation, environment, labour rights, and micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs).
- 4.1.2. Ensure effective implementation of existing comprehensive economic partnerships, including the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnerships (RCEP).
- 4.1.3. Enhance and strategise economic partnerships with existing External Partners to advance mutual sectoral interests.

## **Objective 4.2. Amplify ASEAN Centrality in other regional and multilateral fora**

Aligned with the *ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Upholding Multilateralism* adopted in 2021, ASEAN will continue to support an open, inclusive, transparent, and non-discriminatory rules-based multilateral trading system that is responsive to changing economic realities and promotes a more globally competitive ASEAN. In this vein, ASEAN will amplify ASEAN Centrality in other regional and multilateral fora – not only to pursue cooperation in traditional trade and investment sectors but also to promote complementarities and synergy on cross-cutting initiatives such as climate action, environmental protection, technological advancements, and areas of other mutual interests.

### **Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 4.2.1. Elevate economic partnerships with emerging economies and/or regional groupings that share similar strategic importance.
- 4.2.2. Commit to adhere to rules-based multilateral trading system and actively contribute to regional fora.
- 4.2.3. Strategically engage with global and regional institutions to build a mutually beneficial cooperation based on comprehensive evidence-based assessment, particularly but not limited to, in strategic sectors such as technological transformation, sustainability towards realising inclusive economy and narrowing development gap.

## **Objective 4.3. Elevate ASEAN's position in the global value chain (GVC)**

The *AEC Blueprint 2025* and the *ASEAN Work Plan for Enhancing the Global Value Chain (GVC) Agenda 2016-2025* emphasised the need to enhance ASEAN's position in the global value chain (GVC). Ongoing efforts have increased ASEAN's participation in global value chains through an enabling and supportive policy environment, improved statistics, and analytical capacity in support of GVC's related activities, improved trade in services within the GVC, inclusive GVC through the promotion of MSMEs and ASEAN Member States' engagement, as well as greater readiness for future GVC.

Taking forward initiatives in the past decade, ASEAN will further elevate ASEAN's position in the global value chain (GVC). This includes efforts to diversify ASEAN's partners to build the region's supply chain resilience, while exploring competitive and strategic sectors, such as healthcare, metals and mining, electrical machinery, chemicals and energy, semiconductor, agribusiness, and

consumer electronics. Today, ASEAN's market share comprises approximately 3 to 15 per cent globally across these sectors.<sup>18</sup>

## Strategic Measures

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 4.3.1. Strengthen ASEAN's supply chain resilience by upgrading ASEAN's GVC participation.
- 4.3.2. Enhance ASEAN's GVC competitiveness and resiliency through regional industrial cooperation.
- 4.3.3. Optimise ASEAN's future global value chain potentials.

## Objective 4.4. Ensure preparedness for future megatrends

Over the past decade, the region has responded swiftly to megatrends and challenges, from implementing comprehensive efforts to seize opportunities from the fourth industrial transformation,<sup>19</sup> to accelerating the COVID-19 pandemic recovery,<sup>20</sup> to addressing digital transformation.<sup>21</sup> To further strengthen the region's responsiveness, ASEAN will ensure its preparedness for future megatrends by establishing measures to support industrial transformation, including by harnessing evidence-based and data-driven regional policymaking. This is particularly significant given that future megatrends such as demographic shifts, climate change effects, and technology advancements will rapidly reshape the region's economic integration and require precise and fit-for-purpose policy responses.

## Strategic Measures

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 4.4.1. Develop favourable regulatory framework in support of industrial transformation.

<sup>18</sup> Boston Consulting Group, Final Report: AEC Post-2025 Study: Towards AEC 2045: Options and Potentials for the AEC 2045 (2024).

<sup>19</sup> ASEAN, *Consolidated Strategy on the Fourth Industrial Revolution for ASEAN (CS4IR)* (2021), accessible via <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/6.-Consolidated-Strategy-on-the-4IR-for-ASEAN.pdf>.

<sup>20</sup> ASEAN, *ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF)* (2020), accessible via [https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/ACRF-Implementation-Plan\\_Pub-2020.pdf](https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/ACRF-Implementation-Plan_Pub-2020.pdf).

<sup>21</sup> ASEAN, *Bandar Seri Begawan Roadmap: An ASEAN Digital Transformation Agenda to Accelerate ASEAN's Economic Recovery and Digital Economy Integration* (2021), accessible via [https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Bandar-Seri-Begawan-Roadmap-on-ASEAN-Digital-Transformation-Agenda\\_Endorsed.pdf](https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Bandar-Seri-Begawan-Roadmap-on-ASEAN-Digital-Transformation-Agenda_Endorsed.pdf).



- 4.4.2. Adapt with the ever-changing dynamics through evidence-based regional policymaking.
- 4.4.3. Improve the response to greater ASEAN data needs.
- 4.4.4. Bridge the gaps towards sustainable development of ASEAN Statistics.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL 5**

### **A NIMBLE AND RESILIENT COMMUNITY: Empowering the AEC and ASEAN peoples, withstanding shocks, stresses, crises, and volatility**

As ASEAN confronts imminent demographic challenges and the escalating impact of climate change, the region will need to find ways to operate effectively amidst greater volatility and disruption, including over the supply of key resources. By 2030, it is expected that ASEAN's population will increase to more than 720 million, an annual growth of 0.8 per cent compared to the population of over 638 million recorded in 2015.<sup>22</sup> The structure of ASEAN's population will also shift, with the middle class reaching 485 million people, comprising 70.0 per cent of ASEAN's population in 2030.<sup>23</sup> Supporting this population will require the seamless flow of quality products and services which will require the integration of resilience principles into the AEC's plans to withstand shocks, stresses, and future crises. ASEAN will also need to enable every segment of the population to prosper and attain success even in the face of unforeseen disruptions.

This Strategic Goal is designed to realise a future ASEAN economy that is nimble and resilient, building upon internal strengths to better absorb shocks and strengthen crisis response. This Strategic Goal will be implemented through focused Objectives on: (a) securing a stable and resilient supply chain, (b) building resilient energy supply and infrastructure and establishing coordinated action in safeguarding energy security, (c) ensuring food security and enhancing water resources management, (d) safeguarding macroeconomic resilience and financial stability, (e) advancing ASEAN-wide and ASEAN-ready training and employment efforts, as well as (f) strengthening the AEC by refreshing internal planning and coordination processes. ASEAN's collective efforts, coupled with the empowerment of ASEAN's diverse societies, are key to strong and resilient economic growth.

<sup>22</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), *World Population Prospects 2024* (2024), accessible via <https://population.un.org/dataportal/data/indicators/49/locations/96,116,360,418,458,104,608,702,764,626,704,920/start/2020/end/2030/bar/barvertical?df=5032e669-97fb-4aed-9096-bd70fc3b88f1>.

<sup>23</sup> Boston Consulting Group, Final Report: AEC Post-2025 Study: Towards AEC 2045: Options and Potentials for the AEC 2045 (2024).

### **Objective 5.1. Secure a stable and resilient supply chain**

ASEAN's economic growth relies heavily on an interconnected supply chain to facilitate the seamless flow of goods and services. However, recent disruptions such as the COVID-19 pandemic have underscored the vulnerability of global supply chains to shocks. By prioritising resilience, ASEAN can enhance its ability to withstand future disruptions, safeguard critical industries, and preserve economic stability. ASEAN will secure a stable and resilient supply chain by ensuring seamless access to essential goods during crises, while enhancing automation and digitalisation efforts to recover quickly from potential supply chain disruptions. ASEAN will also optimise industrial innovation and diversification to strengthen the supply chain in critical sectors. This is particularly imperative given the heavy reliance on several partners for some key sectors, including food and agriculture, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, mining, metals, and garments,<sup>24</sup> which could be subject to greater volatility amidst crises.

#### **Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 5.1.1. Enhance regional alignment on cross-border trade-related coordination, processes, and systems to minimise impact from regional or global trade disruptions.
- 5.1.2. Enhance automation and digitalisation to accelerate recovery from supply chain disruptions.
- 5.1.3. Optimise ASEAN's industrial innovation to sustain and expand access to ASEAN products.

### **Objective 5.2. Build resilient energy supply and infrastructure and establish coordinated action in safeguarding energy security**

ASEAN's heavy reliance on fossil fuels accounts for 81.9 per cent of its energy supply. This poses a challenge in fulfilling increased demand amidst supply chain disruption and risks.<sup>25</sup> ASEAN will build greater resilience in energy supply and infrastructure, while establishing coordinated action in safeguarding energy security. The advancement in decarbonisation of coal trade, expansion of power trading and gas infrastructure, as well as greater energy supply interconnectivity, will enable ASEAN to better withstand potential crises.

<sup>24</sup> Boston Consulting Group, Final Report: AEC Post-2025 Study: Towards AEC 2045: Options and Potentials for the AEC 2045 (2024).

<sup>25</sup> ASEAN Centre for Energy, *ASEAN Energy Outlook 8: 2023-2050* (2024), accessible via <https://aseanenergy.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/8th-ASEAN-Energy-Outlook.pdf>.

## Strategic Measures

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 5.2.1. Enhance decarbonisation of coal trade to increase the resiliency and supply security of ASEAN Member States amidst global energy supply disruptions.
- 5.2.2. Expand the multilateral power trading and enhance gas connectivity infrastructure.
- 5.2.3. Enhance renewable energy infrastructure and its interconnection to facilitate seamless integration for ASEAN's infrastructure.
- 5.2.4. Advance future ASEAN's energy interconnectivity, including in land transmission and sub-sea cables.
- 5.2.5. Pool investment to build energy security supporting the development of relevant infrastructure, enhance the power grid, improve cross-border connectivity, and address critical energy demand.
- 5.2.6. Intensify coordinated action in safeguarding energy security, including by implementing the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Petroleum Security and manage potential supply disruptions by the establishment of oil and gas stockpiling.

## Objective 5.3. Ensure food security and enhance water resources management

In the future, millions across ASEAN will face the impacts of climate change. Rising sea levels and shifting crop harvests are expected to threaten food and water security,<sup>26</sup> adding another layer of potential challenges for ASEAN's economy. ASEAN will continue building resilience to ensure food security and water resources management. This will enable the region to better withstand potential crises and emergencies, through measures such as enhanced market connectivity, integrated food security information systems, promotion of investment, access to financing for small-scale farmers, accelerated innovative technologies for agri-food production, enhanced collaboration, the empowerment of a new generation in agriculture, and renewed emphasis on water resources management.

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<sup>26</sup> Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), *Climate Change 2023: Summary for Policymakers* (2023), accessible via [https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/downloads/report/IPCC\\_AR6\\_SYR\\_SPM.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_SYR_SPM.pdf).

## **Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 5.3.1. Increase the resilience of foods, agriculture, and forestry against climate change, natural disasters, and other shocks.
- 5.3.2. Enhance market connectivity and distribution networks for agriculture and food products.
- 5.3.3. Strengthen integrated food security information systems to effectively forecast, plan and monitor supplies and utilisation for basic food commodities.
- 5.3.4. Strengthen existing emergency rice reserve mechanisms, including local-based food resources, to ensure effectiveness and quick release of emergency rice reserves.
- 5.3.5. Promote investment in agricultural research and development (R&D) and infrastructure to address agri-food productivity issues.
- 5.3.6. Facilitate access to financing for small-scale farmers and other stakeholders within the food value chains to enable them to participate in sustainable agri-food systems.
- 5.3.7. Accelerate digital transformation, including adoption of innovative technologies and practices to increase productivity and resilience in agri-food production.
- 5.3.8. Enhance collaboration with the private sector, international organisations, and think-tanks to promote public-private partnerships on the security of agri-food systems.
- 5.3.9. Enhance integrated water resources management.
- 5.3.10. Empower new generation in agriculture through agri-entrepreneurship.

## **Objective 5.4. Safeguard macroeconomic resilience and financial stability**

Financial stability remains as the cornerstone principle for designing and implementing supportive policies and instruments during economic shocks and emergencies. In this regard, ASEAN will safeguard macroeconomic resilience and financial stability. Through coordinated efforts in strengthening regulatory frameworks, enhancing risk management, and integrating fiscal policies, ASEAN aims to increase its levels of accessibility and depth, improve access to

international capital markets, reduce the cost of businesses expansion across ASEAN, and enhance the quality of financial market surveillance.<sup>27</sup>

## Strategic Measures

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 5.4.1. Safeguard financial stability to support capital flows and integration through strengthened infrastructure and supportive policies.
- 5.4.2. Integrate risk-financing principles across financial institutions to mitigate and respond to crises such as pandemic and disaster, among others.
- 5.4.3. Leverage from existing regional funding mechanisms and explore innovative mechanisms for responding to emergencies such as pandemic and disaster, among others.
- 5.4.4. Strengthen cooperation in enhancing treasury and public financial management in ASEAN.

## Objective 5.5. Advance ASEAN-wide and ASEAN-ready training and employment efforts

Mindful of the potential shift in technological trends and automation, as well as a rapidly ageing population, it is imperative for ASEAN's future economy to empower ASEAN's workforce in close collaboration with the efforts being taken in the socio-cultural pillar. This is crucial as ASEAN's elderly population is expected to double in 2050. Ensuring continued productivity will necessitate tailored measures to advance ASEAN-wide and ASEAN-ready training and employment efforts, particularly in negatively impacted sectors, including in agriculture and several services sectors. Empowering the workforce will also enhance ASEAN's share of value-add to goods and services in the global market in years to come.

## Strategic Measures

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 5.5.1. Encourage the optimisation of the use of secure internet of things (IoT) to intensify and advance manpower training, job creation, job placement, career advancement, labour inspection, and labour protection.

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<sup>27</sup> Boston Consulting Group (2024) Final Report: AEC Post-2025 Study: Towards AEC 2045: Options and Potentials for the AEC 2045.

- 5.5.2. Strengthen retraining and reskilling programme in the face of demographic shift.
- 5.5.3. Promote measures to protect gig economy workers.
- 5.5.4. Develop regional continuing education and training (CET) services ecosystem and platforms to promote lifelong learning.

### **Objective 5.6. Strengthen the AEC by refreshing internal planning and coordination processes**

Strengthening the AEC by refreshing internal planning and coordination processes is crucial for realising ASEAN's economic integration objectives. By improving internal processes and coordination mechanisms, such as information exchange platforms and decision-making procedures, ASEAN can ensure the implementation of AEC initiatives is effective and robust. This concerted effort fosters trust among ASEAN Member States, promotes collaboration, and harnesses the collective potential of ASEAN economies by strategically allocating resources to significant efforts that can deepen economic integration and increase global competitiveness.

### **Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 5.6.1. Revisit and refresh AEC internal planning and coordination processes.
- 5.6.2. Strengthen institutional environment, foster partnerships, and enhance the sustainability of ASEAN Community Statistical System (ACSS).
- 5.6.3. Enhance dissemination, communication, visibility, and use of ASEAN Statistics.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL 6**

### **AN INCLUSIVE, PARTICIPATORY, AND COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY: Leaving no one behind, charting people-centred ASEAN**

The implementation of the *AEC Blueprint 2025* advanced an inclusive, innovative, and competitive business environment which has benefitted MSMEs and contributed to the economic success of both businesses and workers. ASEAN will need to continue its comprehensive efforts to engage with the private sector, reinforce public-private partnership, and expand engagement with other stakeholders.

Based on these milestones, this Strategic Goal aims to realise an inclusive, participatory, and collaborative Community, ensuring no one is left behind and charting people-centred ASEAN. In this regard, four (4) Objectives are included to achieve this Strategic Goal by: (a) proactively narrowing the development gap; (b) enhancing the participation of vulnerable and marginalised communities in regional economic integration; (c) intensifying partnerships among public sector, private industries, academia, and civil societies; as well as (d) promoting the collaboration with sub-regional economic cooperation towards the improvement of the well-being of the people in the sub-regional areas.

### **Objective 6.1. Proactively narrow the development gap**

More than two decades after the initial commitment to narrow the development gap was launched in 2000, ASEAN will need to continue to empower all people without leaving anyone behind. ASEAN will proactively narrow the development gap by addressing disparities in economic development through capacity-building, enhancing the productivity of informal sectors, widening access to modern technology and education in digital skills, fortifying institutional capacity, integrating resilience to climate shocks and adaptation for vulnerable groups and areas into plans, strengthening capabilities in data collection and analysis to enable effective policymaking, and pooling different options of sustainable and innovative financing to narrow the development gap.

### **Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 6.1.1. Enhance capacity of MSMEs and the private sector located in lagging areas within ASEAN Member States to facilitate seamless regional and international trade.
- 6.1.2. Enhance productivity of informal sectors by tapping into digitalisation, and expanding their access to microfinance.
- 6.1.3. Facilitate access to modern technology and provide education in digital and other essential skills to underserved groups and areas.
- 6.1.4. Strengthen institutional capacity at the regional, national, and local levels to implement ASEAN commitments, monitor development outcomes, and exchange information.
- 6.1.5. Foster resilience to climate shocks and adaptation to sustainability measures to generate value and enhance quality of life for vulnerable groups and areas.

- 6.1.6. Identify sectors with greater development gaps and enhance sustainable and innovative financing to address those gaps, including but not limited to exploring opportunities to grow ASEAN's philanthropic services ecosystem.

### **Objective 6.2. Enhance the participation of vulnerable and marginalised communities in regional economic integration**

Building upon intensive consultation with a wide range of stakeholders undertaken in the development of this Strategic Plan, ASEAN will continue to ensure that economic integration is pursued in an inclusive and participatory manner without leaving anyone behind by enhancing the participation of vulnerable and marginalised communities in regional economic integration. First, it will ensure that a broader spectrum of voices and perspectives are represented in decision-making processes for regional economic policies. This will lead to more equitable and representative outcomes. Second, it will tap into overlooked talent pools to empower vulnerable and marginalised communities and drive economic growth in a rapidly evolving demographic structure. Third, this approach will address inequalities, create pathways for socio-economic mobility, and contribute to ASEAN's overall economic progress while cultivating a society where everyone has the opportunity to thrive and prosper.

### **Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 6.2.1. Enhance social safety-nets mechanism in all-life cycle of individuals to equip ASEAN communities in the event of crises and calamities, particularly for vulnerable and marginalised communities.
- 6.2.2. Enhance and ensure resiliency of ICT infrastructure and connectivity in rural areas.
- 6.2.3. Enhance financial literacy among underserved, vulnerable, and marginalised communities.

### **Objective 6.3. Intensify partnerships among public sector, private industries, academia, and civil societies**

It is imperative to ensure that the benefits of economic integration are experienced by the intended stakeholders, including the private sector and other relevant partners. ASEAN will intensify partnerships among public sector,



private industries, academia, and civil societies, in addition to the existing coordination that is organised through the ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ASEAN-BAC) and Joint Business Councils (JBC).

## **Strategic Measures**

Strategic Measures under this Objective are:

- 6.3.1. Institutionalise partnerships with private sector, academia, civil societies, and financial institutions on wide range of frameworks and initiatives, including professional qualifications, under ASEAN Economic Community (AEC).
- 6.3.2. Regularise outreach activities on ASEAN's economic integration efforts for references of private sector, academia, and civil societies.
- 6.3.3. Establish regular channels and enhance mechanisms for relevant stakeholders to provide their inputs/feedback/concerns on initiatives of AEC.
- 6.3.4. Enhance the involvement of well-established research institutes within the region in the context of promoting research activities on AEC.

## **Objective 6.4. Promote the collaboration with sub-regional economic cooperation towards the improvement of the well-being of the people in the sub-regional areas**

ASEAN will promote the collaboration with sub-regional economic cooperation towards the improvement of the well-being of the people in the sub-regional areas, including by fostering collaboration and investment in competitive areas such as tourism and energy. By leveraging the strengths and resources of subregional areas, ASEAN will uplift communities, reduce disparities, and improve the overall quality of life in subregional areas.

## **Strategic Measure**

The Strategic Measure under this Objective is:

- 6.4.1. Explore, promote, and strengthen the synergy between ASEAN and sub-regional economic cooperation initiatives to advance economic integration and narrow the development gap in the ASEAN region.

### **III. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW MECHANISM**

#### **A. Implementation Mechanism**

- i. The ASEAN Economic Community Council (AEC) shall be the principal body accountable for the overall implementation of the Strategic Measures and Activities encompassed in the AEC Strategic Plan 2026-2030 and its successor plans to fulfil the economic components of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045. The AEC shall be supported in the implementation of the AEC Strategic Plan(s) by the relevant ASEAN Sectoral Ministerial Bodies under its purview and their subsidiary bodies.
- ii. Relevant sectoral and cross-sectoral bodies shall be responsible for the identification and the implementation of their supporting initiatives (e.g. as reflected in their Sectoral Work Plans, Annual Priorities) to operationalise the Objectives, Strategic Measures, and Activities articulated in the AEC Strategic Plan(s). ASEAN Member States will be responsible for following up on and overseeing relevant implementation efforts at the national level, including the preparation of detailed action plans.
- iii. To ensure the realisation of the goals and desired outcomes as envisaged in the AEC Strategic Plan(s), the AEC shall establish and maintain a transparent, efficient, and inclusive implementation mechanism that will promote and support the effective and robust implementation of the AEC Strategic Plan(s) and its attendant documents at the regional and national levels. The mechanism shall provide opportunities to exchange views, ideas, and good practices, thus contributing to strengthening cooperation among AEC stakeholders.
- iv. Recognising the complex and cross-cutting nature of measures, the AEC shall foster greater synergies by strengthening partnerships and collaboration, including deepening public-private partnerships in critical sectors. AEC will also pursue a whole-of-region and whole-of-government approach to effectively implement the AEC's Strategic Measures and achieve its desired economic transformation for the region.
- v. To ensure the dynamism of AEC in the face of the changing global and regional landscapes and new and emerging issues, all AEC Sectoral Bodies shall be proactive and future-oriented in the implementation of the Strategic Measures.
- vi. Various partnership arrangements will also be developed to promote widespread engagement with different stakeholders, ensuring broad-based support and active, sustained participation in the economic integration process.

## **B. Monitoring and Evaluation**

- i. The ASEAN Secretariat shall monitor the implementation of the Strategic Measures, Activities, and Supporting Initiatives for the AECC through a results-based monitoring and evaluation system. To ensure comprehensive and robust monitoring and evaluation of the AEC Strategic Plan, the ASEAN Secretariat will engage both internal and external expertise as appropriate. The ASEAN Community Statistical System will play a key role in this process, particularly through its involvement in the collection of identified statistical indicators.
- ii. The implementation mechanism shall include a robust results-based monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system that will track the progress and effectiveness of implementation of the AEC Strategic Plan and attendant documents (i.e., Sectoral Plans, Cross-Sectoral Plans, and other Strategic Plans). The M&E system will include the identification and setting of baselines, targets, key performance indicators (KPI), and outcomes as means of verifying and measuring implementation success.
- iii. At a broad and strategic level, results-based monitoring shall be undertaken by the ASEAN Secretariat and shall be reported to the High-Level Task Force on ASEAN Economic Integration (HLTF-EI) and ASEAN Economic Community Council (AECC) regularly. Meanwhile, sectoral desks under the ASEAN Economic Community Department (AECD) of the ASEAN Secretariat will be responsible for the conduct of the regular monitoring and reporting of their respective Sectoral Work Plans.
- iv. With regard to the monitoring and evaluation of cross-pillar Strategic Measures among the three Pillars and ASEAN Connectivity, regular reporting may be made through the appropriate coordination mechanism on cross-pillar issues (e.g., the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR) or any mechanisms and/or platforms that may be established).

## **C. Review**

- i. The AEC Strategic Plan(s) will be reviewed in five (5) year cycles, with the aim of refreshing the Strategic Measures and Activities. The focus areas for the review will be informed by the M&E system. Strategic planning for the next cycle of the AEC Strategic Plan will commence in the fourth year and adopt an agile, adaptable, and nimble approach to strategy setting while taking into consideration new and emerging developments and trends.

- ii. Additionally, given the five-year cycle for Sectoral Plans under the AEC, sectoral desks may also consider commencing their review process in the fourth year of their respective implementation cycles. The outcomes of these reviews may then be submitted to the respective Sectoral Bodies for consideration in refreshing the Sectoral Plan.

#### **D. Resource Mobilisation**

- i. ASEAN Secretariat shall facilitate the mobilisation of resources from ASEAN Member States, External Partners, private sector, international institutions, and knowledge partners. Resources may include, but are not limited to funding, expertise, and capacity building support to implement the AEC Strategic Plan. The provision of resources will take into consideration the sustainability of efforts, initiatives, and projects, as well as established mechanisms.

#### **E. Risk Management**

- i. A risk management strategy will be embedded in the overall M&E system to proactively identify, assess and mitigate risks that could impact the implementation of the AEC Strategic Plan and attendant documents. The ASEAN Secretariat will continuously monitor and identify potential risks amongst Strategic Measures and Activities, while Sectoral Bodies will identify risks amongst Supporting Initiatives. Risks may include resource constraints, timeline delays, and unforeseen external factors.

#### **F. Communications and Public Outreach**

- i. ASEAN will advance efforts to amplify the reach of the AEC Strategic Plan 2026-2030 and its successor documents through a clear and targeted communication and public outreach strategy, in line with the *ASEAN Communication Masterplan III*.
- ii. The ASEAN Secretariat will play a proactive role in the dissemination of information to all stakeholders. The ASEAN Secretariat, through the ASEAN Integration Monitoring Directorate (AIMD), will pursue efforts to communicate the implementation, outcomes and impacts of the AEC Strategic Plan to the public.

## List of Abbreviations

<b>ACIA</b>	ASEAN Comprehensive Investment Agreement
<b>ACSS</b>	ASEAN Community Statistical System
<b>ACTF-BE</b>	ASEAN Coordinating Task Force on Blue Economy
<b>ADB</b>	Asian Development Bank
<b>AEC</b>	ASEAN Economic Community
<b>A ECC</b>	ASEAN Economic Community Council
<b>AECD</b>	ASEAN Economic Community Department of ASEAN Secretariat
<b>AIFF</b>	ASEAN Investment Facilitation Framework
<b>AIMD</b>	ASEAN Integration Monitoring Directorate
<b>AIPRAP</b>	ASEAN Intellectual Property Rights Action Plan
<b>AMS</b>	ASEAN Member States
<b>AOIP</b>	ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific
<b>ASAM</b>	ASEAN Single Aviation Market
<b>ASEAN-BAC</b>	ASEAN Business Advisory Council
<b>ASFF</b>	ASEAN Services Facilitation Framework
<b>ASSM</b>	ASEAN Single Shipping Market
<b>ATIGA</b>	ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement
<b>ATISA</b>	ASEAN Trade in Services Agreement
<b>CCUS</b>	Carbon capture, utilisation, and storage
<b>CEP</b>	Closer Economic Partnership
<b>CET</b>	Continuing education and training
<b>CPR</b>	Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN
<b>CSOs</b>	Civil society organisations
<b>CS4IR</b>	Consolidated Strategy on the Fourth Industrial Revolution
<b>DEFA</b>	ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement
<b>ESG</b>	Environmental, social, and governance
<b>FTA</b>	Free trade agreements
<b>GHG</b>	Greenhouse gases

<b>GVC</b>	Global Value Chain
<b>HLTF-EI</b>	High-Level Task Force on ASEAN Economic Integration
<b>ICT</b>	Information and communications technology
<b>IoT</b>	Internet of Things
<b>IP</b>	Intellectual Property
<b>IPR</b>	Intellectual Property Rights
<b>IUU</b>	Illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing
<b>JBCs</b>	Joint Business Councils
<b>KPI</b>	Key Performance Indicators
<b>MNP</b>	Movement of Natural Persons
<b>MRAs</b>	Mutual Recognition Arrangements
<b>MSMEs</b>	Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>NEIs</b>	New and emerging issues
<b>RCEP</b>	Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership
<b>RE</b>	Renewable energy
<b>R&amp;D</b>	Research and development
<b>SDGs</b>	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
<b>S&amp;T</b>	Science and technology
<b>TPES</b>	Total Primary Energy Supply
<b>UNCLOS</b>	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
<b>USD</b>	United States Dollar



# **ASEAN SOCIO-CULTURAL COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN**





# ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Strategic Plan

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) is dedicated to realising the full potential of ASEAN citizens. At the heart of the ASCC is the commitment to improve the quality of life of ASEAN people through cooperative initiatives that are people-oriented and people-centred. The ASCC opens a world of opportunities to collectively deliver and fully realise social, human, and sustainable development to foster an ASEAN identity and prepare the ASEAN community to face new and emerging challenges in the future.
2. Through the *ASCC Blueprint 2025*, which served as a comprehensive framework for the ASCC from 2016 to 2025, ASEAN propelled socio-economic development in the region by implementing and supporting initiatives to achieve a beneficial, inclusive, sustainable, resilient, and dynamic ASEAN Community.
3. With the completion of the *ASCC Blueprint 2025*, the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 (ACV 2045) and the accompanying ASCC Strategic Plan will intensify efforts to realise a resilient, inclusive, relevant, sustainable, innovative, dynamic and people-centred ASEAN by 2045 and strengthen substantive, meaningful, and mutually beneficial partnerships while upholding ASEAN Centrality. The ASCC Strategic Plan, guided by the ASEAN Charter and key ASEAN documents, provides concrete strategic measures and approaches to overcome current challenges as well as anticipate emerging trends and challenges facing the region. It serves as a strategic framework for the ASCC in developing initiatives, programmes and activities that will further benefit the people of ASEAN.
4. The development of the ASCC Strategic Plan is underpinned by megatrends and challenges, which include rapidly ageing societies, urban-rural disparities, the growing impact of artificial intelligence (AI) and its ethics, including cultural appropriation and discrimination, the future of work, environmental degradation and climate change, disasters, and future public health emergencies and emerging diseases, and rapid migration. The ASCC Strategic Plan also considers the challenges at the global level and surrounding wider regions that might affect the efforts to achieve a resilient, inclusive, relevant, sustainable, innovative, dynamic, and people-centred ASEAN. It also recognises the opportunities arising from emerging megatrends such as digital technology advancement and

green and blue economies. The ASCC Strategic Plan acknowledges the potential of the ASEAN Community's human resources, meaningful roles and contributions of ASEAN centres, environmental and disaster resilience, digital natives, inclusive and sustainable tourism, and the cultural and creative industries to drive economic growth and social development which the ASCC can leverage and maximise towards improving ASEAN people's quality of life. Moreover, the ASCC Strategic Plan draws priorities from key ASCC documents, stakeholder consultations and engagements, cross-pillar coordination and collaboration, and recommendations from the previous implementation of the *ASCC Blueprint 2025* and ASCC sectoral workplans.

5. Anticipating future developments in and beyond the region and recognising ASEAN's contributions to the regional and global development agenda, the ASCC Strategic Plan's implementation will continuously integrate innovation, strategic foresight, and sustainable development. This is to ensure that the ASCC Strategic Plan continues to be effective and relevant in navigating emerging megatrends and challenges, as well as building a resilient and sustainable ASEAN Community that is people-centred, people-oriented, and forward-looking.

## **II. STRATEGIC GOALS OF THE ASCC STRATEGIC PLAN OF ASEAN COMMUNITY VISION 2045**

6. The ASCC Strategic Plan has 12 Strategic Goals, which are composed of 10 Strategic Goals that reflect the ACV 2045 vision statement for the socio-cultural community and two cross-pillar Strategic Goals that focus on narrowing the development gap and sustainable growth and development. It has 16 objectives that correspond to the Core Elements of the ACV 2045 under ASCC.

### **STRATEGIC GOAL 1**

A Community that is people-centred, people-oriented, and interconnected with seamless movement of peoples, goods, and services with a shared ASEAN ownership and identity.

#### **Objective 1.1.**

To achieve an inclusive and sustainable digital society that increases people-to-people connectivity, ensures socio-economic benefits for all, enhances social inclusion and shared identity, prepares the future of work and education,

sustains a safe and clean environment, strengthens health cooperation, and builds climate and disaster preparedness through policy coordination, technical cooperation, and capacity building.

## **Strategic Measures**

- 1.1.1. Enhance regional and national mechanisms to promote universal access to and effective use of information, communication, and digital technology to foster global and regional connectivity as well as ASEAN ownership and shared identity.
- 1.1.2. Strengthen cooperation in enhancing regional and national mechanisms on digitalisation and digital innovation in promoting universal access to and use of information and communication technology to improve protection standards of women and children and eliminate new and emerging forms of violence against women and children, including all forms of offline and online exploitation and abuse across the ASEAN Member States.
- 1.1.3. Expand inclusive access to quality digital and learning for teachers and learners, including youth not in employment, education and training (NEET) in support of lifelong learning and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET).
- 1.1.4. Promote open education data and transparent statistics while ensuring the safety and privacy of individuals with special attention to children and youth.
- 1.1.5. Harness digital innovation and strengthen public-private-people partnerships in the information and media sectors to advance the digitalisation agenda across ASCC, improving digital connectivity and bridging the digital divide to empower ASEAN peoples for inclusive participation and advance digital skills.
- 1.1.6. Promote responsible and sustainable investments in rural development and poverty eradication, including increasing digital usage in agriculture and developing inclusive digital infrastructure, skills, and literacy to strengthen the response to transformation in the agriculture food system.
- 1.1.7. Increase human resource competencies, competitiveness and resilience for the future-ready workforce and relevant stakeholders on technical and technological knowledge, literacy, numeracy and digital competencies, and managerial skills, including through lifelong learning and skills development, so as to improve institutional capacity and address current and emerging challenges.

- 1.1.8. Enhance ASEAN human resource competitiveness and digital literacy for future workforce by leveraging technological transformation, such as communication and digital technology, as well as emerging technology, such as AI, ensuring the quality of basic and higher education and TVET, and providing decent work for all with an industry-driven approach.
- 1.1.9. Promote good governance and an agile, efficient and people-centred civil service in the digital era through enhancement of capacities and strategic partnerships with relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies, ASEAN Entities, ASEAN Dialogue Partners, ASEAN Sectoral Dialogue Partners, ASEAN Development Partners, international organisations, and other stakeholders.
- 1.1.10. Strengthen national capacities and international cooperation in information and media sectors to promote social responsibility by cross-border digital and media platforms and foster mutual respect in cyberspace across ASEAN in mitigating and responding to fake news through initiatives such as media monitoring, fact-checking, reinforcing reliable government communications, and countering extremism.
- 1.1.11. Strengthen the roles of education, family, and community in fostering digital literacy, ethical AI awareness, and responsible Information and Communication Technology (ICT) use to build societal resilience against misinformation, online harm, and the misuse of emerging technologies.
- 1.1.12. Ensure teachers, trainers, and educators of children and young people are able to develop the relevant and adaptive learner-centred pedagogical practices and digital literacy skills needed for remote, online, and blended teaching through effective and equitable pre-service and in-service training, communities of practice and peer networks.

## **Objective 1.2.**

To achieve an integrative Community that is participative and addresses the social and cross-sectoral trends and impacts of people flows and ideas in ASEAN.

## **Strategic Measures**

- 1.2.1. Promote cooperation in information and media to be Knowledge-Driven, Value-Adding and Digitally Transformative by empowering policymakers, media, and other stakeholders with timely and accurate information, enhancing information literacy and digital readiness for

the Knowledge-based ASEAN Community and facilitating a seamless flow of information to drive regional dynamism innovative solutions for contemporary and emerging challenges.

- 1.2.2. Promote greater people-to-people interaction and mobility across and beyond ASEAN through innovative digital content that raises ASEAN awareness, strengthens ASEAN's shared identity, fosters critical thinking and lifelong learning, and programs and projects that would open opportunities, especially for young people
- 1.2.3. Enhance meaningful and inclusive access participation and engagement of people in vulnerable situations<sup>1</sup> in the development and implementation, monitoring and evaluation, as well as decision-making process of ASEAN policies and programmes/initiatives, socioeconomic development and ASEAN community building through strengthened regional, cross-sectoral and cross-pillar platforms and engagements.
- 1.2.4. Strengthen the protection of migrant workers through the mainstreaming of inclusive and gender-responsive approaches in all migration cycles as well as cooperation with the relevant private entities, employers and other partners, and dedicate resources, policies, mechanisms and processes to protect their labour and respond to labour migration challenges of increasing complexity.
- 1.2.5. Enhance the well-being and the protection of migrant fishers as well as facilitate their safe and regular migration, including through collaboration and partnership with ASEAN's external partners, international organisations, and other regional and national stakeholders.
- 1.2.6. Enhance cooperation and dialogue to strengthen the culture of tolerance and moderation, promote cultural pluralisms and responsible citizenship.

## STRATEGIC GOAL 2

A caring Community that will ensure the full potential and improve the quality of life for its peoples that is participative, inclusive, sustainable, and promotes social cohesion, hereby ensuring shared prosperity, especially among vulnerable groups, and leaving no one behind.

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<sup>1</sup> Including but not limited to Women, Children, Youths, Older Persons, Persons with Disabilities, Ethnic Groups, Migrant Workers, and People in At-risk Areas, Remote and Border Areas, and Climate Sensitive Areas and those affected by Climate Change-related Crises, Disasters, Public Health Emergencies, Digital Exclusion and other Technological Advancements, and other Environmental Changes.

## **Objective 2.1.**

To achieve equitable and shared prosperity for all, especially for the vulnerable groups, through connecting them with opportunities and activities that will enhance socio-economic well-being.

### **Strategic Measures**

- 2.1.1. Promote adaptive social protection to strengthen family's resilience and well-being throughout their life cycle, including through the work of social workers and the wider social service workforce.
- 2.1.2. Strengthen cross-sectoral and inter-pillar cooperation across the ASEAN Community to promote gender equality and women's economic empowerment (WEE), such as integrating gender sensitivity in WEE initiatives, increasing access to opportunities for girls and women in education, including TVET, Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM), and mainstreaming gender into labour employment and entrepreneurship policies and programmes.
- 2.1.3. Adapt policies to include support for migrant workers, including those who become undocumented through no fault of their own, and their families left behind or the ones residing with them in crisis situations, facilitate access to social and health services across occupational areas at all stages, including during crisis preparedness, response and recovery and accommodate the specific needs of migrant workers, especially women and children.
- 2.1.4. Address systemic and institutional barriers faced by women, especially women with disabilities and those in vulnerable situations, to entrepreneurship, financial inclusion and broader economic empowerment, and through providing gender-responsive and accessible entrepreneurship support services by strengthening care economy, especially for girls and older women.
- 2.1.5. Develop and strengthen policies and strategies to recognise, reduce and redistribute unpaid care and domestic work through social protection, care infrastructure and gender-responsive labour policies, and promote shared responsibility and work-life balance within the household and the family
- 2.1.6. Create and enhance the enabling environment for care entrepreneurship opportunities to complement and enhance the public provision of care in the community.

- 2.1.7. Strengthen mechanisms and institutional capacity to enhance inclusive and equitable access to social protection through extending coverage, availability, and quality of social protection.
- 2.1.8. Build an enabling environment to provide equitable access to resources, opportunities, and safeguard measures, particularly for the unemployed, poor and people in vulnerable situations,<sup>2</sup> to prevent them from falling under the negative influence of violent extremism and threats as well as from the risk of transnational crime such as human trafficking, people smuggling and the illegal use of social media.
- 2.1.9. Strengthen human and institutional capacity in implementing environment and climate actions and just energy transition at all levels, especially people in vulnerable situations<sup>3</sup> to build inclusive and sustainable resilient ASEAN.

### **STRATEGIC GOAL 3**

A Community that is able to optimise its demographic bonus to, among others, make ASEAN the epicentre of growth and innovation through inclusive, comprehensive and transformative education in a conducive learning environment to develop a highly skilled and competitive labour force and the creation of decent work and high-quality jobs.

#### **Objective 3.1**

To sustain ASEAN as an epicentrum of growth and innovation through inclusive, equitable, and transformative education to achieve a highly skilled and competitive labour force while taking into account the demographic trend in the region.

#### **Strategic Measures**

- 3.1.1. Enhance the responsiveness and cohesiveness of relevant policies and institutional frameworks towards better employment opportunities, employability, higher income, job security, quality of jobs and enterprise competitiveness.

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<sup>2</sup> Including but not limited to Women, Children, Youths, Older Persons, Persons with Disabilities, Ethnic Groups, Migrant Workers, and People in At-risk Areas, Remote and Border Areas, and Climate Sensitive Areas and those affected by Climate Change-related Crises, Disasters, Public Health Emergencies, Digital Exclusion and other Technological Advancements, and other Environmental Changes.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

- 3.1.2. Improve and expand inclusive education and employment for all within the ASEAN region, including to leverage on demographic bonus/demographic dividend by improving access to and quality of education, TVET, and job opportunities for all.
- 3.1.3. Strengthen ASEAN civil service through high-quality education, effective capacity building, application of merit principle, strategic partnerships, and collaboration programmes among ASEAN Member States and other relevant stakeholders to generate highly skilled, competent and future-ready human resources and active global citizens for sustainable development.
- 3.1.4. Promote socially responsible entrepreneurship by fostering creative and inclusive opportunities for youths, such as social entrepreneurship.
- 3.1.5. Accelerate regional initiatives to support ASEAN Member States towards building age-friendly societies and mainstreaming population ageing issues into national policies and development plans and programmes, which may include promotion of healthy, active, and successful ageing, care economy, lifelong learning and digital literacy, flexible employment and retirement policies, and sustainable and accessible infrastructure.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL 4**

A healthy ASEAN populace, with higher life expectancy, well-being for all ages, safe from communicable and non-communicable diseases with Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and access to resilient healthcare architecture.

### **Objective 4.1.**

To achieve a resilient Community that promotes human security and increases people's resilience in responding to future health emergencies, crises, disasters, and impacts from climate change.

### **Strategic Measures**

- 4.1.1. Accelerate the implementation of One Health Initiative by enhancing institutional and human capacity, increasing investment, research and development for public health prevention, preparedness and response (PPR) activities, and strengthening the capacity and resources of ASEAN-related centres such as ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases (ACPHEED).



- 4.1.2. Minimise the risk, exposure, and vulnerability of people living in at-risk areas to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters, including through enhancing adaptive and shock-responsive social protection system and empowering them to become agents of resilience.
- 4.1.3. Institutionalise coherence and coordination on strengthening regional and national data disaggregated by sex, age, and disability, including on family development, poverty and equity, and establish a reliable regional database for key sectors to support ASEAN policies and programmes while ensuring the safety and privacy of individuals.
- 4.1.4. Enhance the effectiveness of the implementation of universal health coverage, including pharmaceutical development, food safety and control system, maternal and child health, ending all forms of malnutrition, enhancing food and nutrition security through sustainable food systems, expanding access to traditional and complementary medicine, ensuring the availability of service and care for mental health, healthy and active ageing, health service for people in vulnerable situations<sup>4</sup> while emphasising the need to address relevant social factors such as poverty and decent employment for all.
- 4.1.5. Promote and strengthen a community that is healthy, caring, sustainable and productive, and one that practices a healthy lifestyle resilient to health threats and has universal access to healthcare, and nurture the participation of civil society to cushion against emerging health risks.
- 4.1.6. Enhance local community resilience by, among others, integrating gender-responsive disaster risk management, ensuring women's leadership in preparedness and response efforts and through the promotion of traditional and local knowledge and wisdom on disaster management and risk reduction.
- 4.1.7. Strengthen holistic strategies and evidence-based policies to address biodiversity challenges, enhance climate resilience, policy coordination and capacity development, and adopt best practices for conservation and sustainable management of terrestrial, coastal and marine, wetlands, peatlands, biodiversity, land and water resources.
- 4.1.8. Enhance cooperation for the conservation, protection, restoration, scientific research, technology transfer and sustainable use of

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<sup>4</sup> Including but not limited to Women, Children, Youths, Older Persons, Persons with Disabilities, Ethnic Groups, Migrant Workers, and People in At-risk Areas, Remote and Border Areas, and Climate Sensitive Areas and those affected by Climate Change-related Crises, Disasters, Public Health Emergencies, Digital Exclusion and other Technological Advancements, and other Environmental Changes.

coastal and marine environments, respond to, and deal with the environmental risk of pollution and threats to marine ecosystem and coastal environment, such as marine debris and marine plastic pollution particularly the respect of ecologically sensitive areas.

- 4.1.9. Strengthen ASEAN health architecture in responding to future health emergencies, crises and disasters, impact of climate change, emerging trends and external challenges through strengthened data-driven decision-making in healthcare, improved synergy and strong multisectoral collaboration between the health, finance and other relevant, complementing global health efforts and strengthening the global health architecture.

## **Objective 4.2.**

To achieve a sustainable Community that advances a thriving, healthy and resilient ASEAN for future generations.

## **Strategic Measures**

- 4.2.1. Promote resilient health systems in response to all hazards, including communicable emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases, zoonotic diseases, neglected tropical diseases, antimicrobial resistance, environmental degradation, climate change and food insecurity through investments in healthcare infrastructures, strengthening health information systems, implementing health promotion, and enhancing regional capacity towards the prevention and control of communicable diseases and their risks in the ASEAN Member States.
- 4.2.2. Accelerate action to reduce risk factors of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), intensify efforts to promote the screening of people at risks of NCDs and monitoring systems for NCDs, and strengthen the capacity of health systems in incorporating the principles of UHC to include management of NCDs.
- 4.2.3. Enhance community awareness and social responsibility on the ill effects of dangerous and illegal drugs and other addictive and harmful substances through policy formulation, development and implementation of preventive programmes, adoption and utilisation of effective treatment, rehabilitation, reintegration and after-care programmes, research on substance abuse problems, and community engagement and advocacy programmes.

- 4.2.4. Enhance policies, strategies and models for mental health and well-being to enable people of all ages to cope with the stresses of life, realise their potential, learn, work and live well and eventually contribute to their communities while enhancing preventive, curative, and rehabilitative approach in alignment with international and national frameworks.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL 5**

A Community where its peoples play an active role in all aspects of life through the promotion of human security, enhancing peoples' resilience through public-private partnerships in line with the ASEAN sustainability agenda.

### **Objective 5.1.**

To achieve an inclusive Community where all people have an active role to play in all aspects of life and achieve sustainable progress, including through partnerships and collaboration.

### **Strategic Measures**

- 5.1.1. Enhance regional strategy and national policy to strengthen disability-inclusive development, contributing to a resilient, inclusive and prosperous ASEAN community that focuses on addressing inequalities and promoting disability empowerment.
- 5.1.2. Strengthen public understanding and awareness through media engagements and campaigns about the rights of persons with disabilities while providing opportunities and ensuring comprehensive and inclusive social protection.
- 5.1.3. Leverage the growth opportunities of the care economy in the ASEAN region by encouraging the development of products, infrastructures, technologies, services, and solutions tailored to the needs of the ageing population aligned with promoting healthy ageing and intergenerational resilience aiming to maximise functional ability and continue living independently.
- 5.1.4. Strengthen local institutions and community-based approaches that promote the participation of local governments/authorities, provinces, townships, municipalities, cities, and villages through the central government in the development of ASEAN capacity-building programmes that benefit their respective communities.

- 5.1.5. Accelerate children's access to and participation in affordable, quality, and inclusive early childhood care and education (ECCE) and foundational learning, particularly for people in vulnerable situations<sup>5</sup> to ensure their holistic and integrated development by stimulating their early learning and enhancing their health, nutrition, and overall well-being, especially those within the first one thousand days.
- 5.1.6. Advance initiatives to promote and develop the ASEAN Creative Economy (ACE), increase the value creation and contributions of Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs), including in strengthening of ASEAN Identity and shared civilisational values, and implement capacity-building initiatives and talent development programs to enhance the skills of cultural and creative workers.
- 5.1.7. Strengthen the capacity and capability of the ASEAN public sector, including civil servants, to respond to the needs of the peoples, emerging challenges, and technological advancements through the highest standard of professionalism, efficient, effective, transparent and accountable public services, participatory and innovative approaches, and strategic collaboration.
- 5.1.8. Strengthen regional and multi-stakeholder initiatives and engagement to proactively respond to new and emerging forms of violence to eliminate all forms of discrimination, exploitation, trafficking, harmful practices, intolerance, bullying, and violence and abuse against children, women, persons with disabilities, youths, migrant workers, the elderly/older persons, and victims/survivors of trafficking in persons, and ethnic groups, people in vulnerable situations.<sup>6</sup>
- 5.1.9. Eliminate all forms of maltreatment on the basis of old age and gender through rights-based/needs-based and life cycle approaches that promote equitable access of older persons to public services, income generation, health care services, social protection, and essential information, as well as preventive measures, legal protection, and effective support system.
- 5.1.10. Enhance quality care, well-being, gender equality, social justice, human rights and fundamental freedoms, especially people in vulnerable situations,<sup>7</sup> in response to all hazards and emerging social and economic

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<sup>5</sup> Including but not limited to Women, Children, Youths, Older Persons, Persons with Disabilities, Ethnic Groups, Migrant Workers, and People in At-risk Areas, Remote and Border Areas, and Climate Sensitive Areas and those affected by Climate Change-related Crises, Disasters, Public Health Emergencies, Digital Exclusion and other Technological Advancements, and other Environmental Changes.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

risks/threats through a holistic and multi-disciplinary approach and regional inter-sectoral mechanisms.

- 5.1.11. Develop and strengthen sustainable financing mechanisms for social protection, UHC, early childhood care and development and foundational learning, disaster risk reduction and social pension.
- 5.1.12. Accelerate extension of coverage, accessibility, availability, comprehensiveness, quality, equality, affordability and sustainability of social services and social protection.
- 5.1.13. Promote government, private sector, ASEAN Dialogue and Development Partners, and community collaboration to facilitate knowledge sharing, effective resource mobilisation and develop continuous training and re-training systems, promoting human capital development and regional cooperation in education, training, and research.
- 5.1.14. Promote awareness, respect and protection of human rights, particularly those of persons with disabilities, women, children, youth, older persons and others in vulnerable situations to enhance understanding of human rights principles and relevant ASEAN declarations and instruments and their effective implementation.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL 6**

A Community with a shared ASEAN identity that is adaptive and responsive to evolving national needs, as well as relevant regional and global issues.

### **Objective 6.1.**

To achieve a Community that is adaptive and responsive to evolving cross-pillar and cross-sectoral trends, as well as national, regional, and global issues and development.

### **Strategic Measures**

- 6.1.1. Promote regional cooperation in education, training, and research, strengthening ASEAN's role in regional and global research networks.
- 6.1.2. Promote the innovative use of information and communications technology to preserve and promote ASEAN traditional sports and games (TSG), including the engagement of ASEAN youth, media, volunteers, private sectors, and other stakeholders to support ASEAN TSG and enhance awareness of its role in ASEAN community-building.

- 6.1.3. Promote knowledge and awareness of intellectual property rights (IPR) cooperation and implementation, including policy options concerning IPR of cultural and creative assets, such as traditional knowledge and cultural expressions, to safeguard and ensure equitable use and benefits to alleviate poverty.
- 6.1.4. Enhance the quality and competitiveness, including through internationalisation of higher education institutions and training institutions, and cultural and creative industries, including visual arts, performing arts, film, music, and animation, through regional and global cooperation.
- 6.1.5. Encourage the government, private sector and community to develop a system of continuous training and re-training to support community engagement, lifelong learning, and workforce development.
- 6.1.6. Ensure food adequacy and accessibility and the availability of clean water, sanitation, and hygiene, especially for people in vulnerable situations,<sup>8</sup> and the ability to cope with disasters, food price shocks and scarcity by developing adaptive mechanisms and strategies, including in times of crisis, among others, through cross-sectoral and cross-pillar coordination.
- 6.1.7. Explore the possibility of establishing shock-responsive financial and insurance mechanisms and strategies for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation
- 6.1.8. Enhance positive economic, social, and environmental linkages among urban, peri-urban, and rural areas, including strengthening policies and strategies for managing the impact of population growth and urbanisation.
- 6.1.9. Strengthen regional cooperation to protect, restore, conserve, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems resources, combat desertification, halt and reverse biodiversity loss and land degradation.
- 6.1.10. Strengthen global and regional partnerships and cooperation to support the implementation of relevant international agreements and frameworks, including promoting cooperation in environmental management, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and natural resources, and climate change through environmental education, community engagement, and public outreach.

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<sup>8</sup> Including but not limited to Women, Children, Youths, Older Persons, Persons with Disabilities, Ethnic Groups, Migrant Workers, and People in At-risk Areas, Remote and Border Areas, and Climate Sensitive Areas and those affected by Climate Change-related Crises, Disasters, Public Health Emergencies, Digital Exclusion and other Technological Advancements, and other Environmental Changes.

#### 6.1.11. Strengthen ASEAN towards becoming a global leader in disaster management

### STRATEGIC GOAL 7

A Community where women are empowered to participate fully and effectively in ASEAN Community-building and realise their full potential in its decision-making processes.

#### Objective 7.1.

To achieve a Community where women are empowered to effectively and fully participate in the ASEAN Community-building process, including having access to opportunities and activities that will further enhance their socio-economic well-being and advance recovery.

#### Strategic Measures

- 7.1.1. Strengthen policies and action plans that better respond to the needs of women and girls in the region and enhance the capacities of sectoral bodies to undertake initiatives that benefit and protect the rights of women and girls.
- 7.1.2. Strengthen the engagement of women's organisations in ASEAN consultation, planning, and implementation so that the perspectives and needs of women and girls are better addressed and better responded to.
- 7.1.3. Institutionalise support for intergovernmental strategies and processes as well as ASEAN Member States gender mainstreaming and gender equality initiatives, including capacity building and knowledge-sharing initiatives to address gender issues.
- 7.1.4. Institutionalise a clearly articulated and coordinated approach to gender equality.
- 7.1.5. Ensure inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making and leadership of women and girls at all levels, including their empowerment in peace and security.
- 7.1.6. Increase and enable investments in building universal, gender-responsive and sustainable care systems and social services to recognise and reduce the burden of unpaid care work of women and girls in the family, including especially during times of crisis and disaster.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL 8**

A Community where youth can meaningfully contribute to the strengthening of a dynamic, innovative, resilient ASEAN Community, and in addressing contemporary and emerging challenges, advancing sustainable socio-economic development, and reinforcing ASEAN awareness, values and identity.

### **Objective 8.1.**

To achieve a resilient and integrative community where youth can meaningfully contribute and participate in promoting human security, social cohesion and strong family cohesion with due regard to increase people's resilience in addressing social and cross-sectoral trend and development in the region.

### **Strategic Measures**

- 8.1.1. Strengthen the capacity and role of ASEAN youth in addressing contemporary and emerging challenges by providing more opportunities for ASEAN youth through various approaches and platforms, as well as increasing the access to and availability of decent work in the job market for the youth.
- 8.1.2. Promote the role and participation of ASEAN youth in regional and global industries, particularly creative industries and entrepreneurship, leadership programmes, respect for cultural diversity, sustainable socio-economic development, and digital advancements, including through exchange, scholarship, youth dialogue, volunteerism, internship, and fellowship programmes, to foster greater regional collaboration among youth.
- 8.1.3. Provide a platform for participation and further local and regional collaboration among the ASEAN youth, as well as between ASEAN youth and their peers from other regions, towards biodiversity conservation, climate change consciousness, and action and disaster risk reduction, and disaster management initiatives through education and capacity building.
- 8.1.4. Empower young people and communities at all levels in climate action and disaster resilience by engaging advocates and establishing partnerships at all levels through relevant and appropriate strategies consistent with ASEAN Member States' respective national interests.



## STRATEGIC GOAL 9

A Community that is proud of its identity and assumes ownership of the preservation, conservation and value creation of its cultural heritage, arts and traditions while also promoting cultural industries.

### Objective 9.1.

To achieve a Community that is proud of its ASEAN Identity through continuous cooperation in raising ASEAN awareness and fostering ASEAN identity by strengthening people-to-people connectivity, cultivating a culture of prevention, and promoting both inherited and constructed values.

### Strategic Measures

- 9.1.1. Project ASEAN's visibility through comprehensive, multi-stakeholder branding efforts, which are represented by common ASEAN identifiers, such as ASEAN Day, ASEAN Flag, ASEAN Anthem, and ASEAN Emblem.
- 9.1.2. Increase ownership and deepen the sense of ASEAN identity and the spirit of belonging to the ASEAN Community amongst students, children, youths and all stakeholders as part of strengthening the ASEAN Community.
- 9.1.3. Strengthen the ASEAN Community and ASEAN shared values in the government by reinforcing ASEAN Identity through innovative policy initiatives both at the regional and national levels.
- 9.1.4. Promote a dynamic, sustainable and inclusive ecosystem of stakeholders to foster greater understanding, tolerance and a sense of regional agendas' value-centric ASEAN identity and communities through forging partnerships.
- 9.1.5. Strengthen ASEAN identity and solidarity among the people through the use of digital information while focusing on the appreciation of shared and common denominators, such as history, folklore, culture, tradition, and food, among others.
- 9.1.6. Strengthen ASEAN identity among villages community through the existing ASEAN Villages Network to increase ownership, particularly in the rural areas.
- 9.1.7. Promote the knowledge of the political, legal system, history, culture, shared heritage and religion and faiths of ASEAN Member States to foster a culture of respect for all, unity in diversity, and a common identity.

- 9.1.8. Promote ASEAN globally through diverse approaches such as arts, musical gala, film festivals, and heritage programs, projecting a unified ASEAN voice in relevant global socio-cultural fora and negotiations.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL 10**

A Community that advances sports to contribute towards the growth of ASEAN as a sporting hub for excellence to promote peace, inclusion, health, education, and socio-economic development.

### **Objective 10.1.**

To achieve a community that preserves TSG and advances sports, including to promote peace, health, and mental well-being of people, harness the culture of sportsmanship, and contribute to socio-economic development, shared prosperity, and fulfil aspirations.

### **Strategic Measures**

- 10.1.1. Support the growth of the sports industry and high-performance sports development through innovation and technology utilisation, enhancing cooperation and cross-sectoral collaboration in sports science and management, knowledge exchange, and professional capacity building to promote mechanisms to improve administrative governance in sports, which in turn contributes to the realisation of the potential of ASEAN athletes at international sports arenas and as a means of nurturing ASEAN pride.
- 10.1.2. Strengthen collaboration with relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies in promoting sports participation and physical activities across different age groups as an additional step towards a healthier and more active ASEAN Community.
- 10.1.3. Promote inclusive access to sports and recreation to increase participation among local communities, including women, persons with disabilities, and people in vulnerable situations<sup>9</sup> by setting up more sports and recreation zones across the ASEAN Member States, with the engagement of local authorities and multi-stakeholder partnerships for

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<sup>9</sup> Including but not limited to Women, Children, Youths, Older Persons, Persons with Disabilities, Ethnic Groups, Migrant Workers, and People in At-risk Areas, Remote and Border Areas, and Climate Sensitive Areas and those affected by Climate Change-related Crises, Disasters, Public Health Emergencies, Digital Exclusion and other Technological Advancements, and other Environmental Changes.

continual sports infrastructure development and promotion of healthy lifestyle among the people of ASEAN.

- 10.1.4 Strengthen the sports ecosystem to support inclusivity, decent work, and entrepreneurial opportunities in sports, particularly the advancement of and synergy between physical education and talent development, youth professional exchanges, job apprenticeships, and other skills development programmes.
- 10.1.5. Preserve and promote ASEAN TSG at local, regional, and international levels.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL 11**

A nimble and resilient Community that is empowered in responding to future crises and long-term challenges. We continue to narrow development gaps through relevant initiatives and promote inclusive, participatory, and equitable access to economic opportunities.

### **Objective 11.1.**

To achieve a resilient Community that ensures shared prosperity that continues to narrow development gaps through equitable access to opportunities and relevant initiatives that enhance social and economic well-being.

### **Strategic Measures**

- 11.1.1. Promote inclusive human capital development, economic self-reliance, and sustainable livelihood, especially among the poor, women, youth, older persons, and persons with disability through access to quality higher education, transformative and industry-based programs and trainings, decent work, employment opportunities, and entrepreneurship.
- 11.1.2. Accelerate inclusive and sustainable socio-economic growth at the national and regional levels through multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder and community-based approaches that guarantee access to social protection, economic empowerment and other opportunities for the poor, and people in vulnerable situations<sup>10</sup> towards eradicating multi-dimensional poverty.

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<sup>10</sup> Including but not limited to Women, Children, Youths, Older Persons, Persons with Disabilities, Ethnic Groups, Migrant Workers, and People in At-risk Areas, Remote and Border Areas, and Climate Sensitive Areas and those affected by Climate Change-related Crises, Disasters, Public Health Emergencies, Digital Exclusion and other Technological Advancements, and other Environmental Changes.

- 11.1.3. Establish and reinforce platforms and mechanisms, including ASEAN Villages Network, that facilitate local, community-based approaches and inclusive participation through engagement to actively contribute to and benefit from development initiatives, facilitating collaboration and cooperation among villages to expedite rural transformation and enhancing access to markets for rural products, creating opportunities for these products to penetrate regional and international markets, thereby promoting economic growth in villages.
- 11.1.4. Mainstream women's empowerment across ASEAN, including through the promotion of women's entrepreneurship, gender-responsive budgeting, and ensuring the representation of women in decision-making and leadership both in public and private sectors.

## **Objective 11.2.**

To achieve a resilient Community, especially at the local level, against future crises and long-term challenges, including climate change and health emergencies preparedness and response through a whole of ASEAN approach for sustainable resilience.

## **Strategic Measures**

- 11.2.1. Strengthen health systems to be resilient in the prevention, preparedness, and response to health-related hazards, including chemical and biological, which incorporate biosafety and biosecurity concerns, radiological-nuclear and hazards and emerging threats.
- 11.2.2. Strengthen ASEAN's collective capability through a whole-of-ASEAN approach in building sustainable resilience by, among others, enhancing anticipatory action and disaster management capabilities and supporting the implementation of effective policies to achieve disaster resilience and sustainable development.
- 11.2.3. Enhance mitigation and adaptation to climate change and reduce vulnerability by promoting climate resilience and adaptive capacity, implementing nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approaches through active engagement of the ASEAN Community-based Climate Action.
- 11.2.4. Strengthen communication and linkages among ASEAN processes and mechanisms to swiftly and effectively prepare for and respond to emergencies and disasters, as well as to optimise or streamline the use of existing measures and ASEAN processes.

- 11.2.5. Enhance national and local capacity in undertaking measures to prevent, mitigate, prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters and emergencies, including building sustainable resilience and reducing the impact of disasters by strengthening capacity at all levels for better protection of communities and their ability to minimise losses, and facilitate swift and effective recovery.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL 12**

A green ASEAN that will be achieved through sustainable growth on land and in water, as we embrace the green economy and blue economy in the regional context and strengthen ASEAN's position in promoting sustainability and climate responses.

### **Objective 12.1.**

To achieve a sustainable community that advances ASEAN's sustainability agenda in coherence with the Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2030 global development agenda.

### **Strategic Measures**

- 12.1.1. Adopt good management practices and strengthen policies to address transboundary environmental issues, including pollution, illegal movement and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes, and in doing so, utilise existing regional and international institutions and agreements.
- 12.1.2. Enhance the implementation of regional agreements, such as the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution (AATHP), as well as strengthen the capabilities of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Transboundary Haze Pollution Control (ACC THPC).
- 12.1.3. Strengthen public-private-people partnerships to promote the adoption of circular economy approaches for maximising resource efficiency, including the development of standards for regional circular economy approaches towards sustainable and inclusive growth.
- 12.1.4. Enhance cross-sectoral cooperation to stimulate a sustainable green economy through the promotion of green jobs and green skills and mainstreaming of green jobs and skills in human resources development agenda through awareness raising, policy, research and development of TVET on green skills and national TVET competencies certification systems.

- 12.1.5. Accelerate biodiversity conservation and mainstream biodiversity and climate change into the various development processes in ASEAN to provide opportunities for resilient and sustainable livelihood, and economic development.
- 12.1.6. Enhance cross-pillar coordination to implement a comprehensive approach to environmental and social sustainability resilience, including the promotion of sustainable use of natural resources, ecological health, combatting pollution, reducing emissions, strengthening disaster risk management, and advancing ASEAN workforce to support the blue economy.
- 12.1.7. Enhance cooperation with the private sector on cooperative education internship, secondary school or equivalent immersion programs, STEAM education, and apprenticeship to meet demand-driven competencies and qualifications, including for green jobs and green skills of TVET and higher education, incorporating updated research on advanced technology to meet labour market needs.

## **Objective 12.2.**

To achieve a green ASEAN that harnesses digital innovation and accelerates new and existing work on digitalisation to ensure a safe and clean environment and enhance climate and disaster preparedness.

## **Strategic Measures**

- 12.2.1. Implement a comprehensive strategy for sustainable urbanisation in ASEAN by enhancing participatory and integrated approaches in urban planning and management and strengthening the capacity of national and local institutions to effectively implement strategies and programs aimed at creating cities that are clean, green, liveable and enhance well-being.
- 12.2.2. Expand engagement with the private sector and relevant stakeholders to encourage an increase in climate financing as well as to explore new and innovative financing mechanisms to address climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution.
- 12.2.3. Intensify efforts in utilising and harnessing the full potential of science, technology, and innovation in strengthening climate, disaster resilient infrastructure, and nature-based solutions for sustainable development to realise ASEAN as a centre of excellence for disaster management.

### **III. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW**

7. The ASCC Strategic Plan is guided by the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 as well as other key ASEAN and ASCC instruments and documents, which provide the guidelines, principles and framework for the ASCC.
8. The ASCC will ensure the effective, efficient and full implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the ASCC Strategic Plan through existing and established mechanisms of the ASCC or others that may be established or streamlined as needed, resource mobilisation, strategic communication, and monitoring and evaluation. Its implementation, monitoring and evaluation is also guided by relevant domestic laws, regulations, and policies.

#### **A. Implementation Mechanism**

- i. The implementation of the ASCC Strategic Plan shall employ strategies and approaches that will maximise the role of ASEAN Organs and Bodies to encourage stakeholders, including Entities associated with ASEAN, to enhance public engagement and capacity-building mechanisms on implementation, monitoring and evaluation as well as in the dissemination of relevant knowledge to the peoples of ASEAN. It shall promote the accessibility and availability of platforms for engagement and participation of stakeholders in programmes, meetings, and other initiatives of ASEAN Organs and Bodies, as well as opportunities for partnerships and collaborations. It shall also promote public-private-people partnerships (4Ps), social entrepreneurship and corporate social responsibility (CSR) for inclusive and sustainable socio-cultural development. Furthermore, the ASCC will intensify strategies, work programmes, and initiatives of sectoral bodies under the ASCC Pillar to narrow the development gap.
- ii. The ASCC Council, with the support of the Senior Officials Committee for the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (SOCA), is responsible for overseeing the realisation of the ASCC Strategic Plan. SOCA and the sectoral bodies shall be responsible for result/ outcome-based implementation and the coordination of cross-sectoral and cross-pillar matters to ensure coherence among the three Pillars and ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plans.
- iii. The ASCC Council, through the support of SOCA and the ASEAN Secretariat, shall continue to strengthen the Senior Officials Coordinating Conference on the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (SOC-COM) mechanism to provide a more inclusive and engaging platform for broad

participation of sectoral bodies within ASCC and from other pillars (through their chairpersons/ vice-chairs), the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR) and the Socio-Cultural Officials attached to the Permanent Missions of ASEAN in Jakarta, entities associated with ASEAN, and other relevant stakeholders, including sub-regional organisations.

- iv. The sectoral bodies under the ASCC shall be responsible for operationalising the strategic measures relevant to their mandate by translating them into their respective sector policies, strategies, workplans, programmes, and projects. For strategic measures that are cross-cutting and require collaboration with sectoral bodies within ASCC and from the APSC and AEC Pillars and Connectivity, the ASCC should leverage the existing mechanism or others that may be established or streamlined as needed. Sectoral Bodies will also develop their respective sectoral work plans that are anchored on the ASCC Strategic Plan and the ASCC Results Framework, as well as other relevant ASEAN documents for cross-cutting collaboration which outline Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound (SMART) measures and indicators to ensure the realisation of ASCC's strategic goals and objectives.
- v. The ASCC Council and its sectoral bodies shall promote multi-stakeholder engagement to share expertise and resources, transfer of knowledge and technology, monitor implementation, and strengthen collaboration and partnership on regional cooperation initiatives.
- vi. The ASCC Council and its sectoral bodies shall promote and undertake substantive, practical, and mutually beneficial cooperation with External Partners and other ASEAN partners in the relevant areas of cooperation within the ASCC Strategic Plan while upholding ASEAN Centrality, and other agreed cooperation frameworks, including the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo Pacific (AOIP), where the programmes, projects and activities are in line with the goals, objectives and strategic measures of the ASCC Strategic Plan.
- vii. The ASEAN Secretariat shall also enhance its capacities and responsiveness to support the work of the ASCC in collaboration with relevant sectors, pillars, and stakeholders. Cognisant of the recommendations by the "Recommendations on Strengthening ASEAN's Capacity and Institutional Effectiveness to the 40<sup>th</sup> and 41<sup>st</sup> ASEAN Summits by the High-Level Task Force on ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision," the ASCC Council and sectoral bodies under its



purview, with the support of the ASEAN Secretariat shall take concrete steps to carry out the recommendations towards an enhanced ASEAN institutional capacity and presence.

- viii. Strengthen coordination among ASEAN National Secretariats, National-Specific ASCC Secretariats as applicable, SOCA and Focal Points of ASCC Sectoral Bodies, as well as enhancing the role of Socio-Cultural Officials attached to the Permanent Missions, including in cross-sectoral and cross-pillar coordination, in ensuring timely exchange of information, facilitating effective and meaningful consultation with capitals and actively promoting public awareness on the work and achievements of the ASCC.

## **B. Resources**

- i. In keeping with the principles of ownership and enhancing ASEAN Centrality and in order to support the implementation of the ASCC Strategic Plan, ASEAN Member States are encouraged to mobilise resources to support, when appropriate, the projects and work of the sectoral bodies.
- ii. The ASCC sectoral bodies are encouraged to mobilise resources from external partners, external parties and other sources in terms of, but not limited to, funding, expertise and capacity-building to implement the strategic measures and relevant activities of the ASCC Strategic Plan. Additionally, sectoral bodies have to ensure the resource sustainability of their sectoral workplans in establishing or maximising existing mechanisms to support its implementation while ensuring the transparency and accountability of the mobilisation, utilisation, and management of external resources.

## **C. Communication and Outreach**

- i. The ASCC shall undertake communication and outreach activities to support the implementation of the ASCC Strategic Plan to inform the progress of its implementation, promote awareness and better understanding of the milestone and impact of the ASCC, and foster meaningful participation of stakeholders in the implementation of the ASCC Strategic Plan.
- ii. Furthermore, the ASCC, in line with the ASEAN Communications Master Plan (ACMP), shall work closely with relevant ASEAN Organs and Bodies and stakeholders in developing necessary platforms, mechanisms,

strategies and initiatives to promote awareness and appreciation of the ASCC Strategic Plan for greater and long-term impact.

- iii. The ASCC shall also maximise existing platforms for engagement to enhance their relevance and contribution to the ASEAN Community-Building.

#### **D. Review**

- i. The review, particularly the monitoring and evaluation, of the ASCC Strategic Plan will utilise the existing ASCC Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System, including the ASCC Database for Monitoring and Evaluation (ADME) System.
- ii. SOCA will support the ASCC Council to monitor the progress of the implementation of the ASCC Strategic Plan document through the respective ASEAN national secretariats, sectoral bodies, the ASEAN Secretariat and with the support of the SOC-COM towards the achievement of the strategic goals.
- iii. The M&E System of the ASCC will consist of implementation-focused monitoring and results-based monitoring and evaluation. Building on the current ASCC Blueprint 2025 M&E System, the ASCC will consider lessons learned and recommendations from the End-Term Review of the ASCC Blueprint. These recommendations shall be reflected in the ASCC Results Framework, which is anchored on the ASCC Strategic Plan. The ASCC Results Framework will comprise key performance indicators, baselines and targets that are aligned to the strategic measures of the ASCC Strategic Plan and will serve as a guide in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of sectoral workplans, programmes and activities of the sectoral bodies under the ASCC. The ASCC Results Framework will also provide operational definitions for the key performance indicators to aid in better designing and planning of ASCC initiatives.
- iv. The ASCC Strategic Plan will have a 10-year timeframe. A Mid-Term Review will be conducted in 2030 and an End-Term Review in 2035 to monitor and evaluate the outcomes and impact of the ASCC Strategic Plan. The End-Term Review will specifically focus on long-term outcomes and impact that were achieved since the start of the Strategic Plan's implementation. The results of the reviews shall be reported to the Summit, after deliberation and approval of the ASCC Council.

- v. The ASCC shall continuously enhance its M&E system to adapt to developments and innovation in monitoring and tracking progress and milestones of regional and developmental initiatives.
- vi. The ASCC shall continue to operationalise the ADME System in its data collection and monitoring of the sectoral workplan implementation and the delivery of the key performance indicators in achieving its targets. The ASCC shall encourage all sectoral bodies in socialising and utilising the ADME System for the monitoring and evaluation of the ASCC Strategic Plan and the ASCC Results Framework.

## List of Abbreviations

<b>4Ps</b>	Public-Private-People Partnership
<b>AATHP</b>	ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution
<b>ACC THPC</b>	ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Transboundary Haze Pollution Control
<b>ACE</b>	ASEAN Creative Economy
<b>ACMP</b>	ASEAN Communications Master Plan
<b>ACPHEED</b>	ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases
<b>ADME</b>	ASCC Database for Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>AOIP</b>	ASEAN Outlook on the Indo Pacific
<b>AVN</b>	ASEAN Village Network
<b>CCI</b>	Cultural and Creative Network
<b>CPR</b>	Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN
<b>CSR</b>	Corporate Social Responsibility
<b>ECCE</b>	Early Childhood Care and Education
<b>ETR</b>	End-Term Review
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communications Technology
<b>IPR</b>	Intellectual Property Rights
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>MTR</b>	Mid-Term Review
<b>NCD</b>	Noncommunicable Disease
<b>NEET</b>	Not in Employment, Education and Training
<b>PRR</b>	Prevention, Preparedness, Response
<b>SCO</b>	Socio-Cultural Officers
<b>SMART</b>	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound
<b>SOCA</b>	Senior Officials Committee for the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community
<b>SOC-COM</b>	Senior Officials Coordinating Conference on the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community

<b>STEAM</b>	Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics
<b>TSG</b>	Traditional Sports and Games
<b>TVET</b>	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
<b>UHC</b>	Universal Health Coverage
<b>WEE</b>	Women's Economic Empowerment
<b>WPS</b>	Women, Peace, and Security





# ASEAN CONNECTIVITY STRATEGIC PLAN





# **ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

1. The Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC 2010) and the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 (MPAC 2025) were strategic documents that guided ASEAN's connectivity agenda. Their effective implementation has significantly contributed to the ASEAN Community-building process, strengthened physical, institutional and people-to-people linkages, fostered inclusive economic growth, narrowed the development gap, and promoted sustainable development in ASEAN.
2. Following the completion of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, ASEAN will embark on the next phase in realising a resilient, innovative, dynamic and people-centred ASEAN Community by 2045 through the ASEAN Community Vision 2045, along with the Strategic Plans of the ASEAN Political Security Community, the ASEAN Economic Community, the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community and ASEAN Connectivity.
3. The ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan, covering the period of 2026–2035, is guided by key ASEAN instruments and documents, as well as lessons learned and best practices from the implementation of past connectivity strategies, particularly the MPAC 2025. The implementation of MPAC 2025 has highlighted the importance of enhancing sectoral alignment, strengthening national level implementation, promoting effective coordination between national and regional levels, intensifying engagement with partners and stakeholders, increasing adaptability to regional context, and mobilising resources.
4. To ensure that the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan remains relevant, seven major trends were considered. These include (1) digital transformation; (2) climate change and acceleration of the net zero transition; (3) reconfiguration of supply chains; (4) urban expansion and the emergence of middle-weight cities; (5) increased regionalism; (6) innovation in financing; and (7) ageing population. ASEAN will need to take into account these trends and explore ways to address them through strengthening regional integration and collaboration; as well as leveraging new and emerging opportunities.
5. ASEAN shall continue to drive regional connectivity among ASEAN Member States, supported by Dialogue Partners and other external partners, by implementing the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP),

which is one of the key drivers for strengthening regional connectivity and cooperation, reinforcing ASEAN Centrality as the underlying principle for promoting cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region. The implementation of AOIP will leverage engagements within the region and with partners in the Indo-Pacific region to mobilise resources as well as to enhance links and synergies between the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan and various connectivity initiatives through ASEAN's Connecting the Connectivities approach, including sub-regional and multilateral cooperation frameworks with and within ASEAN.

6. Through the mainstreaming and implementation of AOIP, ASEAN seeks to enhance connectivity within and beyond the region by leveraging existing and future connectivity initiatives that complement the ASEAN Connectivity Agenda. This approach aligns with ASEAN's Whole-of-Community strategy and the Connecting the Connectivities initiative, ensuring synergies between ASEAN's connectivity efforts and broader Indo-Pacific cooperation frameworks.
7. Cognisant of the rapidly evolving global environment, the implementation of the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan will require innovative, agile, responsive, inclusive, forward-looking and people-centred approach.

## **II. STRATEGIC GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIC MEASURES OF ASEAN CONNECTIVITY STRATEGIC PLAN OF ASEAN COMMUNITY VISION 2045**

8. The ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan is envisaged to connect ASEAN by enhancing the physical, institutional, and people-to-people linkages across the region, and support the realisation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045, through six Strategic Areas:
  - Sustainable Infrastructure;
  - Smart and Sustainable Urban Development;
  - Digital Innovation;
  - Seamless Logistics and Supply Chain;
  - Regulatory Excellence and Cooperation; and
  - People-to-People Connectivity.
9. The six Strategic Areas are interconnected and shall be pursued in a holistic manner, which allows greater synergy and coordination across sectors and with the ASEAN Community Pillars, as well as in support of narrowing the development gap goals, where relevant. The six Strategic

Areas contain six Strategic Goals with corresponding 14 Objectives and their respective Strategic Measures. The 49 Strategic Measures provided in the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan are translated into Activities in the Work Plan. The Work Plan describes the Activities that will be undertaken, identifies the relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and Implementing Bodies that will lead, co-lead, or support their implementation, and stakeholders that will be involved, and provides the indicative timelines. The Work Plan may be updated and enhanced, as deemed necessary, by the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee, with the support of the ASEAN Secretariat, and in consultation with the relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and Implementing Bodies. The Strategic Measures and Activities shall be further developed into initiatives, projects and programmes in pursuing the Strategic Goals.

10. The Strategic Goals and their corresponding Objectives and Strategic Measures are as follows:

## **STRATEGIC GOAL 1**

### **SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE**

The Strategic Goal for Sustainable Infrastructure is to achieve “A Community connected through growing networks of sustainable infrastructure within and between ASEAN Member States”.

*Enhancing infrastructure connectivity within and between ASEAN Member States will drive more trade, investment and regional integration, improve access to markets and resources, thereby facilitating more sustainable and inclusive economic development.*

### **Objectives**

- The first Objective for Strategic Goal 1 is “Strengthened development and coordination of infrastructure within and between ASEAN Member States”.

*Rapid economic development, population growth, and environmental concerns have generated a significant demand for sustainable infrastructure – both national and cross-border – across ASEAN. Together with the drive towards sustainability and reconfiguration of supply chains, ASEAN is seeing an accelerated need to strengthen development and coordination of infrastructure within and between ASEAN Member States. The development of well-coordinated infrastructure could boost the economic competitiveness of ASEAN, promoting foreign investment and supporting ASEAN businesses to integrate more deeply into global value chains. This will require not only*

*resources, capacity and solutions to optimise the infrastructure project lifecycle, but also better collaboration between the public and private sectors to create a well-integrated, productive and resilient infrastructure system across ASEAN.*

- The second Objective for Strategic Goal 1 is “Increased public and private infrastructure investment in ASEAN Member States”.

*It is estimated that ASEAN needs at least USD 210 billion of annual infrastructure investment from 2023 to 2030 to sustain economic growth, respond to climate change and promote sustainable development.<sup>1</sup> ASEAN needs to capitalise on private sector investments to help close the funding gap. Innovative financing approaches are needed to attract private and institutional capital to finance these critical infrastructures.*

*ASEAN is committed to incentivising private and public sector funding and financing for infrastructure projects through the creation of a favourable investment climate. By building stronger business cases for infrastructure development, increasing the clarity and transparency of regulatory requirements, strengthening planning and project prioritisation processes, and utilising alternative and innovative financing approaches, ASEAN aims to accelerate overall investment in infrastructure in ASEAN.*

## **Strategic Measures**

In pursuing the Strategic Goal 1, the following Strategic Measures are identified:

- 1.1. Expand the Initial Pipeline of ASEAN Infrastructure Projects.
- 1.2. Enhance cooperation on transport planning and development to bolster transport connectivity across air, land and maritime sectors.
- 1.3. Enhance energy interconnection through ASEAN Power Grid (APG) and Trans-ASEAN Gas Pipeline (TAGP), including liquefied natural gas (LNG) infrastructures.
- 1.4. Accelerate the development of sustainable, accessible, and inclusive digital infrastructure and connectivity across ASEAN.
- 1.5. Expand and strengthen submarine cable connectivity.
- 1.6. Promote public and private investment in sustainable infrastructure.
- 1.7. Strengthen resilience, inclusivity, and productivity of sustainable infrastructure.

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<sup>1</sup> ADB (2022). *ADB Southeast Asia Innovation Hub: Catalyzing Green and Innovative Finance*. Retrieved from: <https://www.adb.org/news/features/greening-southeast-asia-infrastructure-pipeline>.

- 1.8. Promote adoption of environmentally sustainable, climate and disaster-resilient, and carbon-neutral infrastructure and transport solutions.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL 2**

### **SMART AND SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

The Strategic Goal for Smart and Sustainable Urban Development is to achieve “A Community capable of managing urban and rural challenges by leveraging modern technologies, and innovative infrastructure, as well as enhancing ASEAN smart and sustainable cities and villages.”

*Promoting actions that enable cities and villages to capture the benefits of smart and sustainable urban and rural development, while managing significant risks for both its urban and rural communities including congestion, pollution, income and social inequality, will be crucial for enhancing connectivity, narrowing the development gap, as well as promoting sustainable economic growth and social cohesion.*

#### **Objectives**

- The first Objective for Strategic Goal 2 is “Advanced smart and sustainable urban and rural development”.

*With the world’s urban population projected to reach 68% of total population<sup>2</sup> by 2050,<sup>3</sup> there is a significant opportunity to drive social, economic, and financial benefits through smart and sustainable urban development. By embracing smart technologies and solutions, urban areas can enhance their infrastructure and services, improving efficiency in public transport, energy use, and waste management, and promote a circular economy, which can lead to cost savings and increased productivity. Moreover, rural communities can utilise smart solutions to improve access to basic services and economic opportunities. By prioritising smart and sustainable urban and rural development, ASEAN can cultivate dynamic communities that not only support economic growth but also ensure resilience and well-being for their peoples in a rapidly changing world.*

- The second Objective for Strategic Goal 2 is “Strengthened rural development and empowerment of rural communities”.

*Significant development discrepancies exist between rural and urban communities in ASEAN. Promoting well-managed rural development not only*

<sup>2</sup> 6.68 billion out of 9.7 billion people estimated to live in urban areas by 2050.

<sup>3</sup> UN-Habitat (2022). *World Cities Report 2022*. Retrieved from: [https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2022/06/wcr\\_2022.pdf](https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2022/06/wcr_2022.pdf).

*addresses income inequality but also acts as a significant economic driver. Recognising the crucial link between poverty and rural development, ASEAN has emphasised the need for connectivity to bridge the development divide by enhancing transportation, digital infrastructure, and linkages between rural and urban areas. By focusing on empowering rural communities, ASEAN can harness its potential to drive economic growth and ensure that all regions and populations benefit from sustainable development.*

## **Strategic Measures**

In pursuing the Strategic Goal 2, the following Strategic Measures are identified:

- 2.1. Promote integrated, data-driven, and adaptive approaches to urban and rural planning.
- 2.2. Improve quality and affordability of housing and access to essential health services.
- 2.3. Strengthen public safety and security in cities.
- 2.4. Promote environment sustainability and resilience through innovative nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approach to reduce vulnerability to climate change, address environmental issues, including transboundary haze pollution, promote water resources, sanitation and waste management, sustainable use and consumption, circular economy, and increase resource efficiency and urban and rural resilience.
- 2.5. Strengthen cooperation in climate change mitigation and adaptation, resilience, disaster risk reduction, biodiversity protection, and conservation.
- 2.6. Strengthen existing urban and rural infrastructure, human resources, and knowledge sharing platforms to facilitate mobility, improve the efficiency and sustainability of building and construction, integrate effective land use planning, and build climate and disaster resilience, and disability-inclusive infrastructure for sustainable development.
- 2.7. Encourage industries and businesses to capitalise on technologies and use innovation to build competitive advantages and transform process.
- 2.8. Strengthen urban and rural governance and promote partnerships across multi-level governments and multi-stakeholders, including public-private partnerships and community, on sustainable urban and rural development.
- 2.9. Promote financial sustainability, and bridge funding and financing gaps for smart cities as well as urban and rural projects.

- 2.10. Support collaboration and cooperation among villages to enable villages to fast-track rural transformation.
- 2.11. Promote competitiveness and facilitate better and wider rural products' access to markets through innovation.
- 2.12. Strengthen urban-rural linkages and spatial planning collaboration for sustainable urbanisation and sustainable community development.

### **STRATEGIC GOAL 3**

#### **DIGITAL INNOVATION**

The Strategic Goal for Digital Innovation is to achieve “A Community with continuous digital innovation and enhanced cybersecurity, advancing payments and financial markets’ connectivity and efficient cross-border flow of information”.

*ASEAN’s digital economy is growing rapidly and to unlock the region’s digital economic potential and promote digital inclusion, adopting and integrating frontier technologies – such as the Internet of Things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence (AI) and big data – is essential. While technologies and solutions offer significant benefits, their implementation poses challenges including widening digital divide and increasing online safety and cybersecurity concerns, which will need to be addressed through advancing digital innovation, cross-border data flows, and promoting safe, inclusive access to and adoption of digital technologies and services.*

#### **Objectives**

- The first Objective for Strategic Goal 3 is “Expanded and enhanced ASEAN’s digital connectivity”.

*Digital connectivity shall be inclusive and productive for the region – accessible and relevant for the peoples, facilitating safe adoption of advanced technologies, and ensuring that ASEAN as a whole benefit from it. Despite a significant increase in internet subscribers in ASEAN – growing from 26 per 100 persons in 2013 to 72 per 100 persons in 2022 – this progress is uneven across ASEAN Member States.<sup>4</sup> There are considerable opportunities for ASEAN to improve affordable internet access for all, particularly the underserved; enhance its data protection and cybersecurity practices to facilitate cross-border data flows and digital payments; and create environments conducive to innovation and entrepreneurship. Through*

<sup>4</sup> ASEANstats (2023). ASEAN Statistical Yearbook 2023. Retrieved from: <https://www.aseanstats.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/ASYB-2023-v1.pdf>.

*these opportunities, ASEAN can cultivate an inclusive, digitalised society that drives robust regional economic growth.*

- The second Objective for Strategic Goal 3 is “Increased participation of people and businesses in the digital economy”.

*Fostering greater participation in the digital economy requires awareness on the availability and safety of online services, digital literacy and skills, as well as inclusive regulations and digital solutions. A study on the participation of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the digital economy within ASEAN identified significant barriers to digital adoption, including limited knowledge of digitalisation and reluctance to make changes to business processes due to perceived risks.<sup>5</sup> To harness the ongoing digital transformation to foster a thriving regional digital and data economy, ASEAN will need to address regional challenges such as different levels of development and disparate regulatory regimes.*

## **Strategic Measures**

In pursuing the Strategic Goal 3, the following Strategic Measures are identified:

- 3.1. Promote digital data governance to support inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development across ASEAN.
- 3.2. Promote the development of and improve the use and accessibility of open data.
- 3.3. Support the adoption of existing and emerging technologies by all people and businesses, with the focus on MSMEs, women, youth, and persons with disabilities to enhance competitiveness and productivity.
- 3.4. Advance seamless regional payments connectivity.
- 3.5. Enhance collaborative research and development of digital technology, including nurturing innovation, and addressing digital divides.
- 3.6. Strengthen cooperation on cybersecurity measures to protect digital ecosystems, enhance online safety, combat online scams, and enhance trust in digital services, including use of online security technologies and applications.
- 3.7. Enhance information inclusiveness and accessibility and strengthen collaboration in digital media and information literacy to foster digital

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<sup>5</sup> Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia. (2018). *Study on MSMEs Participation in the Digital Economy in ASEAN: Nurturing ASEAN MSMEs to Embrace Digital Adoption*. Retrieved from: <https://connectivity.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/ASEAN-MSME-Full-Report-Final.pdf>.



literacy among ASEAN citizens and addressing fake news, disinformation, and misinformation.

### 3.8. Strengthen and nurture digital talent mobility in ASEAN.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL 4 SEAMLESS LOGISTICS AND SUPPLY CHAIN**

The Strategic Goal for Seamless Logistics and Supply Chain is to achieve “A Community that advances efficient and resilient logistics and supply chains towards effective participation in global value chains”.

*With ASEAN emerging as a vital manufacturing hub, it is important to enhance the connectivity of ASEAN supply chain and logistics networks to reduce trade costs, improve the speed and reliability of goods movement, and facilitate deeper economic integration among ASEAN Member States and with external partners.*

### **Objectives**

- The first Objective for Strategic Goal 4 is “Improved efficiency and competitiveness of ASEAN’s logistics and supply chain connectivity”.

*ASEAN faces significant challenges in achieving efficient, competitive, and resilient supply chains due to its diverse geography, varying levels of economic development, infrastructure gaps, and complex regulatory landscape. To reduce the time and cost of transporting goods in regional and global markets, it is essential for ASEAN to expand the capabilities of manufacturing, logistics and MSMEs, upgrade the transport and logistics infrastructure needed to support export demand, adopt digital technologies, and streamline cross-border procedures to boost the region’s global competitiveness and efficiency in logistics and supply chain.*

- The second Objective for Strategic Goal 4 is “Enhanced logistics and supply chain resilience against economic shocks and disruptions at the global and regional level”.

*Supply chain today faces unprecedented risks from geo-politics, geo-economics, pandemic, climate change and volatile market dynamics. These have introduced additional complexity to the logistics and supply chain environment. Enhancing logistics and supply chain resilience will be essential and could be achieved through strengthening cooperation in promoting diversification, agility to respond to changes and disruptions, and collaborations with partners within and beyond ASEAN.*

- The third Objective for Strategic Goal 4 is “Elevated position of ASEAN in the global value chain”.

*ASEAN shall continue to enhance its comparative advantage in participating in the global value chain. Analysing and understanding comparative advantages enables ASEAN to optimise resource allocation and focus on industries with significant potential for enhancing value-added activities in the global value chain. Improving the core determinants for investment growth such as infrastructure, conducive regulations, and critical mass of skilled workers will be key. Public and private partnerships are needed for upskilling, reskilling and new skilling of workers, as well as promoting and sustaining innovation policies.*

## **Strategic Measures**

In pursuing the Strategic Goal 4, the following Strategic Measures are identified:

- 4.1. Enhance the competitiveness, efficiency and resilience of supply chains.
- 4.2. Promote the adoption of sustainability and circular elements in regional supply chains towards accelerating the transition to a circular economy.
- 4.3. Promote the use of advanced technologies in strengthening supply chain connectivity.
- 4.4. Promote multi-modal supply chain connectivity.
- 4.5. Foster collaboration between government and the private sector associations to strengthen supply chain connectivity, including human resource and skills development.
- 4.6. Promote inclusive participation of MSMEs in the global value chain.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL 5**

### **REGULATORY EXCELLENCE AND COOPERATION**

The Strategic Goal for Regulatory Excellence and Cooperation is to achieve “A Community that promotes regulatory excellence and cooperation towards addressing complex, interconnected and rapidly changing policy environment”.

*There exist gaps in translating regional initiatives into practical implementation on the ground. By promoting regulatory cooperation, increasing transparency, and strengthening institutional support among Member States, ASEAN can enhance its global competitiveness, and promote sustainable development and resilience, allowing the region to promptly address emerging challenges and seize opportunities in a rapidly evolving world.*

## Objectives

- The first Objective for Strategic Goal 5 is “Strengthened implementation of good regulatory practices in regional trade and investment”.

*By adopting transparent, consistent, and predictable regulatory practices, ASEAN can create a better environment for businesses and investors, reducing barriers to trade and promoting cross-border investment. This involves harmonising rules, simplifying administrative procedures, and ensuring effective implementation of regulations across ASEAN Member States. Strengthening good regulatory practices will enable ASEAN to compete more effectively in the global economy, while promoting sustainable and inclusive growth throughout the region.*

- The second Objective for Strategic Goal 5 is “Improved knowledge and capacity on the policies and regulations to facilitate cross-border trade, logistics, and investment”.

*Through investment in capacity-building initiatives, training programmes, and knowledge-sharing platforms, ASEAN can help stakeholders better understand regulatory requirements, foster greater collaborations and streamline procedures. This can also enhance ASEAN’s ability to respond to evolving global challenges and opportunities in the trade, logistics and investment landscape.*

## Strategic Measures

In pursuing the Strategic Goal 5, the following Strategic Measures are identified:

- 5.1. Facilitate more electronic exchange of trade-related documents among ASEAN Member States to enhance trade efficiency and regional competitiveness, including through supporting the implementation of the ASEAN Single Window.
- 5.2. Promote good regulatory practices to support circular and green supply chains in the region.
- 5.3. Promote implementation of social and environment safeguards among MSMEs including good regulatory practices.
- 5.4. Encourage mutual recognition agreements (MRAs) among interested parties for qualifications, standards, and certifications, including skills competency, to facilitate cross-border trade and mobility.
- 5.5. Enhance connectivity by supporting the adoption of digital solutions to streamline and improve the efficiency of customs, immigration and quarantine (CIQ) processes and improving transport regulations.

- 5.6. Streamline cross-border trade and investment procedures to facilitate ease of doing business.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL 6**

### **PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE CONNECTIVITY**

The Strategic Goal for People-to-People Connectivity is to achieve “A Community that fosters greater people-to-people connectivity towards people-oriented and people-centred ASEAN”.

*Social cohesion and cultural diversity can provide impetus for creativity, innovation and development through greater people-to-people connectivity. This could be pursued through deepening socio-cultural interactions, promoting educational and sports exchanges, and facilitating regional collaboration for inclusive development, while enhancing people mobility.*

#### **Objectives**

- The first Objective for Strategic Goal 6 is “Enhanced regional sense of belonging”.

*A deepened sense of regional belonging in ASEAN is shaped by shared histories, cultural heritage, customs and beliefs, frequent exchanges, and close economic cooperation. Embracing the diverse cultures, traditions, and values of each ASEAN Member State enriches the region. Promoting cultural exchanges and collaboration can help harness the collective strength and creativity of the peoples of ASEAN. A strong regional identity builds a cohesive community that drives regional progress and resilience.*

- The second Objective for Strategic Goal 6 is “Enhanced cooperation in education and academic research and exchanges”.

*Enhancing cooperation in education and academic exchange allows ASEAN to equip its people with the skills needed for a competitive and resilient workforce, promote knowledge-sharing and research and development, and drive innovation and better educational outcomes. This collaborative approach can effectively address the skills gap, improve education quality, and boost graduate employability while aligning outcomes with industry needs.*

- The third Objective of Strategic Goal 6 is “Greater mobility of people across ASEAN”.

*Promoting the ability and ease with which ASEAN citizens can travel, study and work across the region offers numerous benefits to regional socio-economic development, including a diverse and dynamic student community and labour force, growing tourism flow, and enhanced economic integration. Additionally, easier travel facilitates cultural exchange and understanding, fostering a stronger sense of community and social cohesion. There are significant growth opportunities by maximising the ease of travel, expanding initiatives to facilitate skilled labour mobility, and raising awareness of intra-regional travel opportunities.*

## **Strategic Measures**

In pursuing the Strategic Goal 6, the following Strategic Measures are identified:

- 6.1. Amplify ASEAN awareness and foster a shared ASEAN Identity.
- 6.2. Promote social cohesion, inclusive development, and equitable growth through creative economy and tourism.
- 6.3. Promote Southeast Asia as a leading tourist destination by facilitating ease of travel for tourists, strengthening human resource capacity, and capitalising on advanced technologies.
- 6.4. Expand existing intra- and extra-ASEAN scholarship and other education opportunities and develop new scholarships to facilitate greater student mobility.
- 6.5. Promote and facilitate greater labour mobility across the ASEAN region, and collaborate with relevant stakeholders to enhance the quality of internships in the region.
- 6.6. Promote regional collaboration and exchanges in sports.
- 6.7. Leverage digital transformation to enhance accessibility and inclusivity in education.

## **III. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW**

11. ASEAN will work towards the full and effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan through relevant mechanisms of ASEAN Connectivity, efficient resource mobilisation, strategic communication and outreach, and robust monitoring and evaluation.

## **A. IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISM**

12. Successful delivery of the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan requires well-defined implementation mechanism with whole-of-Community approaches, clear governance and ownership, strong focus and alignment to drive collaborations, and adaptive planning and management.
13. The implementation of the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan shall employ whole-of-Community approaches that will maximise the role of ASEAN Organs, ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and Implementing Bodies, ASEAN Connectivity National Coordinators, national agencies, ASEAN Foundation, ASEAN Centres, entities associated with ASEAN, private sector, academia and research community, civil societies, and other external partners. It shall promote engagement and participation of various stakeholders, as well as create opportunities for collaborations, including public-private-people partnerships.

### **A.1 Clear governance and ownership**

14. Clear governance and ownership drive stronger commitments and ensure alignment with Strategic Goals, Objectives and Strategic Measures, minimise risks, and enhance overall implementation of ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan. It is essential to have well-defined roles and responsibilities for different stakeholders to promote synergies of work.
15. The ASEAN Coordinating Council shall oversee the implementation of the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan through the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee with the support of the ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and Implementing Bodies, ASEAN Connectivity National Coordinators, relevant national agencies and the ASEAN Secretariat. The ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee will promote internal and external engagements, thereby fostering partnerships and collaborations with various stakeholders.
16. ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and Implementing Bodies shall operationalise the relevant Strategic Measures and Activities by translating them into their respective sector policies, strategies, work plans, programmes, and/or projects. Leads or Co-Leads identified shall coordinate and oversee the implementation of the respective Strategic Measures and Activities, and work with other ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and Implementing Bodies to ensure that implementation is carried out successfully.
17. The ASEAN Connectivity National Coordinators shall oversee the implementation of ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan at the national level,

which include convening national committee or secretariat meetings, monitoring progress, coordinating efforts amongst line agencies of the respective ASEAN Member States, identifying any bottlenecks in implementation, and providing regular updates to the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee. The ASEAN Connectivity National Coordinators will also serve as an advocate for ASEAN Connectivity and lead outreach and engagement initiatives within their respective countries.

18. Subregional arrangements such as the Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA), the Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT), the Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS), the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS), the Singapore-Johor-Riau (SIJORI) Growth Triangle, and the Framework for Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam Cooperation can contribute towards enhancing ASEAN Connectivity and narrowing the development gap, including sustainable infrastructure development, climate change, digital inclusion, rural-urban continuum, and skills development.
19. Partnerships and cooperation are vital for achieving ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Goals and Objectives as they bring together diverse resources, knowledge, expertise and perspectives from various stakeholders. Through strengthening existing partnerships and forging new partnerships, the implementation of the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan can be strengthened. The ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee shall deepen and broaden engagements with Dialogue Partners and other external partners in developing connectivity initiatives that leverage on the core competencies of various partners.
20. The ASEAN Secretariat shall enhance its capacities to support the work of ASEAN Connectivity in close collaboration with ASEAN Community Pillars, relevant sectors, external partners and other stakeholders. The ASEAN Connectivity Division shall support the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee in overseeing the progress of ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan, addressing implementation issues, facilitating project development, and ensuring effective communication with internal and external stakeholders, including with relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and Implementing Bodies, Dialogue Partners and other external partners.

## **A.2 Strong focus and alignment to drive collaborations**

21. The cross-cutting nature of connectivity means that the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan and other Strategic Plans of ASEAN

Community will mutually reinforce and support one another. Strong coordination and alignment across these stakeholders across the four Strategic Plans and relevant sectoral plans will ensure that efforts are complementary and synergistic towards contributing to the ASEAN Community Vision 2045. An inclusive and participatory process has been utilised in the design and development of the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan and such an approach will continue to be used during implementation to ensure alignment of work plans, strengthen commitment to delivery, and address the needs and priorities of the region. Flagship initiatives may also be identified for each Strategic Area of the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan to tackle cross-cutting issues, mobilise partners and accelerate actions.

### **A.3 Adaptive planning and management**

22. An agile approach to implementation of the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan will be important to provide timely adjustments to its delivery, as needs, plans and priorities of ASEAN and its Member States are likely to change over time. Adaptive planning and management seek to minimise the risks related to uncertainty and implementation at different stages through learning by doing, feedback collected through stakeholder engagements and regular assessments of the continued relevance of Strategic Measures and Activities.

## **B. RESOURCES**

23. ASEAN will continue to facilitate the mobilisation of resources, from Dialogue Partners, other external partners and international institutions, in terms of financial resources, technical skills and human resources, to support the effective implementation of the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan.
24. In order to strengthen implementation, a number of initiatives will be launched to strengthen implementation through exploring innovative funding structures, and broaden resource channels by engaging a broader group of partners, including the ASEAN Business Advisory Council, other major business councils engaging ASEAN and relevant businesses associations or federations, through existing stakeholder engagement events and activities as well as targeted outreach efforts to support the implementation of ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan; and strengthening the capacity of the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee, the ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and Implementing Bodies, ASEAN Connectivity National Coordinators, and the ASEAN



Secretariat, including the ASEAN Connectivity Division to support planning, management and implementation of the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan.

25. To advance connectivity, the following Strategic Measures on AOIP are identified:
  - a) Encourage the continuation of AOIP-centric platforms, including the ASEAN Indo-Pacific Forum (AIPF) for facilitating dialogue and consultation with ASEAN's external partners to complement and support the ASEAN Connectivity Agenda.
  - b) Encourage ASEAN's external partners' continued support for the AOIP by undertaking practical and concrete cooperation to advance the ASEAN Connectivity Agenda, including through resource mobilisation and infrastructure projects, in ASEAN and the Indo-Pacific region, while prioritising ASEAN-led initiatives and enhancing monitoring to ensure alignment with ASEAN's long-term vision.

## **C. COMMUNICATIONS**

26. ASEAN shall undertake communication and outreach activities to support the implementation of the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan, including to inform the progress of its implementation, promote awareness and advocacy towards better understanding of the impact of ASEAN Connectivity, and foster meaningful participation of stakeholders in the implementation of the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan at the regional, national and local levels.
27. Proactive stakeholder engagement will be essential to incorporate the needs of various stakeholders and build a long-term value narrative for ASEAN Connectivity. The ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee shall work closely with relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and Implementing Bodies, ASEAN Connectivity National Coordinators, relevant national agencies, the ASEAN Secretariat and external partners in utilising existing or developing new strategies and initiatives to promote awareness and advocacy of the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan for greater and long-term impact.

## **D. REVIEW**

28. The ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan shall be reviewed periodically by the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee with the support of

the ASEAN Secretariat and reported to the ASEAN Summit through the ASEAN Coordinating Council.

29. The ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan monitoring and evaluation system will consist of three key components, namely progress assessment, operational assessment and impact assessment. A results framework for the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan will be developed as a guide for the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation for ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and Implementing Bodies as well as ASEAN Connectivity National Coordinators.
30. Regular monitoring and annual progress review of the implementation of the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan will be undertaken to monitor progress and address issues. A Mid-Term Review and an End-Term Review, covering the periods of 2026-2030 and 2026-2035 respectively, will be conducted to evaluate progress, outcomes and impacts, including achievements and challenges from the implementation of the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan, with a view towards developing successor ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan for 2036-2045 and enhancing connectivity in ASEAN.

## List of Abbreviations

<b>ACMECS</b>	Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy
<b>ADB</b>	Asian Development Bank
<b>AI</b>	Artificial Intelligence
<b>AIPF</b>	ASEAN Indo-Pacific Forum
<b>AOIP</b>	ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific
<b>APG</b>	ASEAN Power Grid
<b>BIMP-EAGA</b>	Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area
<b>CIQ</b>	Customs, Immigration and Quarantine
<b>GMS</b>	Greater Mekong Subregion
<b>IMT-GT</b>	Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle
<b>IOT</b>	Internet of Things
<b>LNG</b>	Liquefied Natural Gas
<b>MPAC</b>	Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity
<b>MRAs</b>	Mutual Recognition Agreements
<b>MSMEs</b>	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
<b>SIJORI</b>	Singapore-Johor-Riau
<b>TAGP</b>	Trans-ASEAN Gas Pipeline
<b>UN-Habitat</b>	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
<b>USD</b>	United States Dollar





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