



# ASEAN Inter - Parliamentary Organization

The 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly

8-13 September 2002, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

23GA/2002/Statement/Kh

## ADDRESS OF

H.R.H. SAMDECH KROM PREAH NORODOM RANARIDDH  
PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY  
OF THE KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA

AT THE 23<sup>rd</sup> GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE ASEAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY  
ORGANIZATION (AIPO)

SEPTEMBER 9, 2002

HA NOI, SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM

*The Honorable Nguyen Van An, AIPO President,*

*Excellencies,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It is a great honor for me to be here among this very distinguished group of parliamentarians in this historic city of Ha Noi. On behalf of the Cambodian Parliament National Group and on my own behalf, I am most grateful to the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and its great People for hosting the Twenty-Third AIPO General Assembly. We are all extremely touched by your warm welcome and generous hospitality.

First of all, I wish to extend my warmest greetings and best wishes to all the distinguished delegates to the 23<sup>rd</sup> AIPO General Assembly. I also wish to congratulate His Excellency President Nguyen Van An and the Organizing Conference Committee for selecting timely and relevant issues for our meeting.

*Mr. President,*

*Distinguished Delegates,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

I believe that our meeting here in Ha Noi is important in the context of the recently concluded World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) or the Earth Summit in Johannesburg. The message we have heard from the Earth Summit is clear and bold: the survival of humanity, that is, global sustainable development. I think that we must not only welcome but also support the priority issues of the WSSD: fighting global poverty, protecting the environment and managing the growing transnational issues that affecting the whole world, both developed and developing. To some extent, the Millennium Declaration in 2000 also centered on key issues of poverty eradication, sustainable development, and combating HIV/AIDS. In addition, the Monterrey Conference in Mexico early this year underlined the importance of sharing global resources by which the developed countries should provide greater development assistance to the least developing and developing countries so that they have the means and the resources to manage those challenging problems.

Today, we are living in a very much challenging and constantly changing world, with the forces of globalization and the complexity of terrorism. I believe that we must work together globally, regionally and nationally to reverse these negative mega-trends—such as global warming, climate change, greenhouse effects, poverty, terrorism, and HIV/Aids. In the recent years, we have experienced serious floods, disastrous droughts, rising temperature as a result of global warming, the threats of terrorism and other transnational issues, increasing HIV/Aids pandemic, growing disparities and widening gaps within and between countries as well as between regions of the world. I am very delighted to see that some of these issues are being discussed at our AIPO meeting so that we can share our perspectives, experiences and lessons learnt.

*Mr. President,*  
*Excellencies,*  
*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

## I. BRIDGING DEVELOPMENT GAPS AND STRENGTHENING INTEGRATION

Although we are under the single roof of ASEAN, the development gaps between the original and new members to some extent have been widening, as we move toward greater regional integration in ASEAN and in the broader context of East Asia cooperation. I believe that ASEAN needs to continue strengthening closer cooperation and at the same time move toward greater integration within our region.

The impacts of globalization and the proliferation of transnational issues could affect all of us in different ways, particularly so for the less developing members. To ensure smooth economic integration, I believe that we should promote greater economic cooperation, such as trade, investment, tourism within the region either through AFTA, the AFTA Plus and ASEAN Investment Area (AIA). As it is envisioned in the ASEAN Vision 2020 and the Hanoi Plan of Action (HPA), our regional economies could be rebound with greater dynamism so long as we continue to strengthen peace, security, and political stability within each of our respective nation and within our region. Without genuine and lasting peace and security, we cannot advance regional development and poverty reduction.

I believe that the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) and the Roadmap for ASEAN Integration (RAI) will further advance ASEAN integration.

## II. MANAGING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Promoting economic growth and development could not be done at the expense of our sustainable environment and our precious natural resources. To do so, it would be at our own peril. Today, we have experienced deforestation, biodiversity degradation, soil erosion, land degradation, floods, droughts, haze, and environment pollution. We are the victims of the global environmental repercussions and to some extent our actions. Currently, for example, the downstream countries of the Mekong River—Cambodia and Vietnam—have been

confronting with both floods and droughts. In the last three consecutive years, Cambodia and Vietnam have experienced serious floods, costing hundred millions of dollars per country.

As stated in both the Millennium and the Earth Summits in 2000 and 2002, respectively, we cannot continue to take a status quo approach with respect to the increasing environment destruction, which we now have seen serious impacts on our human life. Therefore, I believe that we need to integrate and synchronize our national environmental policy and strategy with the emerging regional and global environmental policy to ensure a holistic approach as well as to build regional and global partnership for sustainable environment for all.

In this context, I believe that the ASEAN Parliamentarians should have an important role in developing certain key principles, environmental legislative framework and environmental policy for sustainable development.

### III. FIGHTING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Globally, nearly 1 million women and children are being trafficked every year. Southeast Asia alone is accounted for approximately a third of the total flows, with 60 per cent are trafficked to major regional cities and 40 per cent to other destinations all over the world.

Internal trafficking to meet the demands of the country's sex industry is perhaps the most visible manifestation of this problem. In fact, internal trafficking feeds into international flesh trade. Children, women and men are sent across the borders globally to do the most degrading work. Other forms of trafficking are also known to have occurred including mail-order business, fake marriages, and buying and selling of babies.

Accordingly, I believe that we need to continue to build closer and more effective cooperation as the only to effectively fight this problem. Besides adopting laws and other specific measures related to the protection of women and children in our respective countries, we should strengthen our regional efforts in enforcing the laws, sharing information and designing appropriate programs to assist the victims.

UN Human Rights Commissioner Mary Robinson, in her address to the National Assembly of Cambodia, in Phnom Penh, on 21 August 2002, stated that:

"The women and children who are subjected to this inhumane cruelty are not foreign to us. They are our sisters and daughters, they are our children. This trafficking in them must stop. In today's world there is no place for this. It must be stopped, stopped completely."

And she further continued:

"I am issuing today this 'Appeal from Phnom Penh' to all those countries in the region, which are concerned with this scourge, to work together, to take every necessary step, to leave no stone unturned, to end this vicious and inhuman trade."

I wish to relay the "Appeal from Phnom Penh" to all AIPO members and their respective governments to adopt a common position on this issue. I strongly support her noble appeal for the cause of human justice. I am convinced that all of us as the peoples' representatives have the duty and moral obligation to uphold the rights of the people and respect the dignity of those victims by working together to stop this inhuman trade.

I believe that we, the ASEAN parliamentarians, should adopt common legislations and clear policies on the above critical issue so that we can benefit from our joint efforts for our common causes.

*Mr. President,*

*Excellencies,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Before concluding my remarks, I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate and support H.E. Jose De Venecia, Jr., Speaker of the Republic of the Philippines for his important initiative for establishing the ASEAN Parliament. His Feasibility Study Group has presented us an excellent report, which recommended the transformation of AIPO into the ASEAN Parliament.

Further, I wish to remind all of us, as the AAPP founding members present here today, that the Parliament of the Philippines will host our next AAPP Conference in Manila. We should take this opportunity to finish up our pending business, which is the approval of the Charter of Human Rights for the Asian Nations. As of now, I believe that we have made substantial progress on this matter.

In the context of the Charter of Human Rights for the Asian Nations, with the development of human rights, Cambodia, under the high guidance of His Majesty King Norodom Sihanouk, has adopted a liberal Constitution that abolished death penalty. In this regard, I wish to reiterate my call on all distinguished ASEAN Parliamentarians present here today to reconsider this issue as we attempt to further advance the fundamental rights of our peoples, including to the right to life. In the context of establishing the ASEAN Parliament, I believe that we should not remain far behind Europe and other advanced countries on the abolition of death penalty.

*Mr. President,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Finally, we should look ahead into a more promising future for our region as ASEAN continues to strengthen its dynamism and relevance, as well as build more caring societies for our peoples, as envisioned in the ASEAN Vision 2020. We also need to continue enhancing our ASEAN spirit of cooperation, mutual understanding, consensus building, and tolerance.

Once again, I wish to thank and congratulate His Excellency President Nguyen Van An and the Organizing Committee for a successful AIPO General assembly. I wish each and everyone of you much success.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.



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The 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly

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## SPEECH OF

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF  
THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA,  
H.E. MR. AKBAR TANJNNG,  
AT THE 23<sup>RD</sup> ALPO'S GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING  
IN HANOI, VIETNAM, 9 SEPTEMBER 2002

*Excellency, President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam,  
H.E. Mr. Tran Due Luong,  
Excellency, President of AIPO, H.E. Mr. Nguyen Van An,  
Distinguished Leaders of Delegations,  
Distinguished Delegates and Observers,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

At the outset, allow me on behalf of Delegation of the Indonesian House of Representatives to extend my highest gratitude and appreciation to the people, parliament and government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam for their warm welcome and hospitality accorded to our delegation since our arrival to participate in this important 23rd A1PO General Assembly.

I would like to take this opportunity to convey the warmest and brotherly greetings of the President, Vice President and all members of the Indonesian House of Representatives to all

Delegates and Observers who take part in this Assembly. In particular, permit me moreover to convey my highest respect and appreciation to President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, H.E. Mr. Tran Due Luong, who has just delivered the Opening Address, which concurrently marking the official opening of the 23rd AIPO General Assembly this morning.

*Mr. President,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

From political and security perspectives, a fast growing development in the Southeast Asian region has led to create vulnerability for ASEAN, as well as AIPO, member countries, from threats coming both from inside and outside the region. Admittedly, National Groups are facing political and security threats, ranging from prevalent threats inherited from colonial era to new threats produced by globalisation, which lead the countries and region into disharmony and instability. Transnational issues, such as illegal migrants workers and trafficking in persons, child trade, illegal logging, narcotics and drugs, and, mainly, terrorism, which currently known as "the post-Cold War problems", will consume most agenda of leaders of member countries in the early years of the new Millennium. During the first semester of this year, for instances, several agenda dealing with efforts to respond above transnational issues have been initiated by ASEAN and AIPO through close co-operations, more particularly in handling terrorism.

We are aware that transnational issues can give impacts to our own society and to national interests. It is therefore important to remain that we need to maintain mutual trust while handling transnational issues, which are vulnerable both to our domestic and regional security and stability. In this regard, we should be able to ensure that co-operations amongst National Groups and with other countries beyond ASEAN will not harm ASEAN interests and also relations amongst its member countries. Otherwise, this situation will offer disincentive for the development of ASEAN and AIPO in the years ahead.

It is however known that in reality ASEAN and AIPO are not free from challenges and problems, including those that have been resulted by other region. Unfortunately, recent trend shows that there will be more challenges and problems experiencing by National Groups, particularly in conjunction with continuing efforts in response to terrorism issue. Meanwhile, certain countries are still fragile in accomplishing national succession and transition towards democracy amidst rising demands for democratisation and dissatisfaction against the existing regime. For this reason, solutions to respond transnational issues introduced by National Groups individually or in form of co-operations either with countries inside or outside the region should be kept on the right track, under-controlled, and well co-ordinated. The

solutions will be consequently effective, and not conversely diminishing long-time established mutual trust that can eventually destabilise the region in the future.

*Mr. President,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

From economic perspective, we see that antagonism produced by globalisation still occurs in the region until now. National Groups, which are recovering from regional economic crisis, have at the moment to behold another serious economic crisis triggered by bad corporate governance in several American big corporations. In this relation, we ought to set forth our big attention and become more mindful to respond the situation in other region that can give various impacts to economic condition of each National Groups and the region on the whole. In other words, this means that good corporate and state governance cannot be separated. For this reason, every National Group must have their capability to handle the old and new challenges and problems in their own countries and region, as well.

Along with global economic challenges and problems, more specifically, AIPO member countries are being examined with their commitment to realisation of AFTA. Of course, condition of National Groups in coping with their own unresolved economic problems, and the current threat of globalisation, can influence their readiness. It is however hoped that this situation will not disturb their basic commitment to AFTA. Spirit of togetherness is consequently important to be maintained so that AIPO member countries can help each other to meet the full realisation of AFTA for creating welfare for all in the region, instead of taking their own ways for the fulfilment of their self-interests.

Furthermore, it is worthwhile to renew our commitment to the idea that our regional foundation is central to the national interest of each country in Southeast Asia. To the challenge of globalisation, I am also of the opinion that ASEAN's response is to strengthen economic integration while developing strong bonds and linkages with the rest of the world. I further acknowledge that competing in the global market place demands that we become part of larger regional markets. Still, we will not generate adequate investment and trade flows and compete with giants elsewhere in the world unless we work together as a region.

We realise that closer regional integration is the key to making trade and investment as easy as possible, and as inexpensive as possible. We intend to achieve the important goal to identify impediments to trade and investment and to remove them. Therefore, we see the need to have commissioned a study that will examine comprehensive problems and solutions for realisation of AFTA. Again, I would like to support opinion affirms that for our diverse countries to

survive and prosper, we need closer integration. We support the relevance to think regionally and deepen regional ties since our national and economic interests lie in the destiny of the region and our linkage with the rest of the world. Considerably, in a world of uncertain security and economic flux, it is increasingly clear that individual nations in Southeast Asia cannot hope for peace and prosperity unless they stand together, work together, find common ground, trust one another and speak as one in the councils of the world.

*Mr. President,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

From organisational perspective, entering the first years of the new Millennium, ASEAN and AIPO must respond question whether or not they can keep their basic goal and act consistently in the future. Meanwhile, we know that the Founding Fathers of ASEAN and AIPO have stepped down from political arena since several years ago. This new situation should become challenge for the new generations of leaders in Southeast Asia to maintain a clear vision of ASEAN and AIPO in addressing every problems faced in the years ahead without leaving the basic goals and identity of these regional organisations as have been drafted by the Founding Fathers in the late 1960s.

Correspondingly, ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) as a result of ASEAN member countries' wider co-operation must be able to copy with criticism which says that for the time being the forum has not yet been very active or lack of initiative in addressing an increasing security threats and problems in the region. More seriously, some analysts begin to question the relevance and prospect of the forum, taking lesson from the failure of ASEAN Foreign Ministers in making co-ordinative measures to respond security threats and problems in their own countries and the region. Whilst, the existence of a responsive and more active regional security today is considerably needed, without having to abandon its ideal basic goal.

Last but not least, we are aware that many other matters are of no less importance than the issues that I have just mentioned earlier will induce attention of Delegates and Observers of the 23rd AIPO General Assembly., especially issues on illegal migrant workers and the need to establish a forum for dialogues on human rights issues amongst members of national groups. We convince however that through a frank and conducive atmosphere, constructive results can be produced in order to enhance an existing mutual confidence and co-operation amongst AIPO's National Groups. More significantly, it is hoped that efforts for seeking solutions for new challenges and problems in the region can be introduced. Thank you very much for your kind attention,



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The 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly

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**Statement by His Excellency Mr. Samane VIGNAKET  
President of the National Assembly of Lao PDR  
at the 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly of the  
ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Organization  
held in Hanoi, S.R. of Vietnam, on 8 - 13 September 2002**

*His Excellency Nguyen Van An, President of the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and respectively President of AIPO,*

*Honorable Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

On behalf of the delegation of the National Assembly of Lao PDR, allow me to present my sincere congratulations for the noble efforts made by the National Assembly of Vietnam in preparing and conducting the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Organization (AIPO) General Assembly for the first time in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Through the common efforts and more specifically through the endeavors of His Excellency the President and the AIPO Secretariat, I firmly believe that the 23rd AIPO General Assembly will achieve fine success.

In time of hardship and difficulty faced by Vietnamese people due to the current catastrophic flood, I would like to express my deep grief and sympathy with victims' family.

My sincere salutations and good wishes also go to the honorable parliamentary delegates and observers from friendly countries participating to this Assembly.

I would also like to present my special congratulations for the foundation of East Timor as an independent and sovereign state with national integrity in accordance with the aspirations of the East-Timorese. It is our hope that cooperation and coordination between ASEAN and East Timor will grow to a new stage.

*Excellencies,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

This Assembly is unfolding at a time when ASEAN is celebrating the 35th anniversary of the Association of the Southeast Asian Nations, as well as the 25th anniversary of AIPO, which give place for a propitious forum to jointly review the specific objectives and targets of both organizations, as well as evaluate our performance as the people's representatives.

Our delegation highly evaluates the success of the 35th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting and other parallel events held in Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam. The event reaffirmed the constant ASEAN stance towards the spirit of the Bali Treaty, the Hanoi Plan of Action and the ASEAN 2020 Vision for their gradual realization in view of meeting the ASEAN and world peoples' firm hope of peaceful coexistence, independence and sovereignty, non-interference, and active integration with the world trends, which have become the growth engine for ASEAN in the last 35 years and for AIPO in the last 25 years.

Lao PDR is proud to observe that relations of cooperation based on mutual interest with ASEAN dialogue partners have continued to relentlessly grow simultaneously with the increased ASEAN+3 relations namely with China, Japan and the Republic of Korea, while ASEAN relations with the European Union have advanced to a new stage.

AIPO, as a forum for genuine representatives of the ASEAN peoples, has actively developed and encouraged the realization of ASEAN ideal within the scope of its mandate. It is our opinion that the identification and discussion of important issues at the 23rd General Assembly are appropriate with the present conjunction's political conditions and requirements. It is also conform with the basic principles outlined by ASEAN for the safekeeping of political, economic and social stability of each country, which emphasizes on mutual assistance to narrow the development gap in different sectors between member countries and others.

During the last 5 years since Lao PDR became a full ASEAN and AIPO member, we have actively engaged in different activities in performing our tasks, monitoring and learning the ASEAN and AIPO growth trends. We have noted that a decisive factor for such success has been the solidarity between member countries, the active mutual assistance between old and new member countries in human resources, economic and social development. Based on our activities within the context of AIPO assemblies, we have acquired knowledge and have made proper use of such knowledge to upgrade the National Assembly's capacity with the view of advancing the Lao PDR legislative system towards a unified ASEAN system.

*Respected Chairman,*

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of February 2002, as the National Assembly of the IV Legislature completed its political mandate, up to 99.90% of eligible voters among the Lao population willingly exercised their right to elect 109 representatives to the National Assembly of the V Legislature, which include 25 women. In its inaugural session, the new National Assembly reviewed, deliberated and resolved on several important issues for the nation, such as election procedures and strengthening of key positions within the executive system of Lao PDR. It also adopted a plan of action covering the total term of the new legislature. From there on to the present time, we have continued to actively perform the mandate of a legislative body as enshrined in the Constitution and legislation of the Lao PDR.

For the country's future development based on poverty eradication by 2015 and transcend from conditions of under-development by 2020 according to the aspirations of the Lao pluri-ethnic people, the Lao PDR will actively develop relations of cooperation, integration with the international community, support all ASEAN efforts to build Southeast Asia into a sustainable region of peace and development.

On this occasion, I would like to present sincere appreciation to the National Assembly, the local Assemblies as well as to the people of Vietnam for the warm welcome and the facilities extended to our delegation during their participation to this conference.

I wish fine success to the Assembly.

Thank you!



# ASEAN Inter - Parliamentary Organization

The 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly

8-13 September 2002, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

23GA/2002/Statement/My

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SPEECH BY THE HONOURABLE TAN SRI DATUK AMAR  
DR. SULAIMAN HAJI DAUD, M.P.  
LEADER OF THE MALAYSIAN DELEGATION TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
THE ASEAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY ORGANISATION  
IN HANOI, VIET NAM, 8<sup>TH</sup> - 12<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2002

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*Your Excellency Mr. President,  
Your Excellencies,  
Heads of Delegations,  
AIPO Members and Observer Countries, Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen.*

It is indeed an honour and privilege for me, on behalf of members of the Malaysian delegation to offer our warmest greetings and sincere best wishes to:

*His Excellency Mr. Nong Duc Manh, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Viet Nam;*

*His Excellency President Tran Duc Luong, President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam;*

*His Excellency Mr. Phan Van Kai, the Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam;*

*His Excellency Mr. Nguyen Van An, President of the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, President of AIPO -23;*

And to all the delegates and observers who are present at the 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly of AIPO in this beautiful city of Hanoi.

Since its inception, AIPO has been inspired by the spirit of regional solidarity for the region's common interest and motivated by the numerous development taking place in ASEAN, Asia Pacific and in the world in general. It also has been advancing and promoting the concept of ASEAN which is in fact enshrined in the statutes of AIPO itself.

It is indeed gratifying to see AIPO continue to bring ASEAN legislators and observer countries together to discuss matters of common concern. This augurs well for cooperation, peace and stability in the region.

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

When we first got together as a regional grouping some years ago, ASEAN was viewed as a poor regional bloc which was too diverse in its individual objectives and embroiled in its own internal conflicts. We have since worked hard to ensure the success of ASEAN. Despite our diversity we have shown the world that the mutual respect we have amongst ourselves helps to put us on the world map as one of the most dynamic regions there is today. We have not let our differences come in the way of helping each other prosper.

Indeed, now we have earned the envy of those who think that prosperity is a monopoly of the powerful nations in this world.

*Distinguished delegates,*

Technology has at this juncture given us tools for communication and knowledge that no previous generation had. The Internet not only allows people to reach out directly to one another, without mediation, it also makes it difficult for nations to isolate their people or mislead them with the propaganda of hate. As representatives of our peoples, we must seize these opportunities provided by global politics and by technology, to find ways to understand and help each other across nations and civilizations.

On our ability to build this understanding hinges not only the prospect for global peace in the new century but also the success of the new multilateral trading systems, which seek to reorganize the world as a single global market. It is going to be more difficult to remain outside this global market, particularly as the technologies of convergence give the common man and woman access to information about what is available in every nook and corner of the world.

Not every one, or every nation, is equally a part of the global marketplace, however. We must therefore work to ensure equality of opportunity, equality of access, for all. That is not an easy task. We must first understand each other's civilizational values, because these deeply influence social and economic patterns.

We are committed to basing the new global order on the equality of women and men, on democracy and equal opportunity, but we must all be sensitive to those who may see these values as going against the grain of their civilizations. It is often better to nudge these societies gradually rather than to wrench them from their roots. The attempt to impose an alien culture too suddenly often causes a violent and angry public response, sometimes pushing the pendulum to other extreme.

Today, as we deliberate on our resolutions, to come together with solutions in defense of our regional economy, we need consistent efforts to examine and reform our economic structure and enhance regional economic cooperation. We must not allow our economy to be influenced and dictated by others who only seek material gains at the expense of the livelihood of our people. We have learnt a bitter lesson from the economic and monetary crisis of recent years.

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

For developing countries, the globalisation process has been a source of concern. While developed countries have benefited from globalisation, many developing countries have not shared in these benefits. The income gap between the richest and the poorest has significantly widened over the years, and the number of people living in absolute poverty in developing countries has been increasing despite unprecedented prosperity in the developed world.

Developing countries must therefore be prepared to face the onslaught of globalisation. We must continue to enhance domestic resilience and capacity. Investment in education with emphasis on science and technology must be given priority. Attention must be given to strengthening domestic institutions and the framework of laws, rules and regulations to ensure resilience in the face of challenges posed by globalisation.

It will be crucial for the developing countries to work together in the efforts to reshape globalisation. They need to be fully prepared and coordinate their positions effectively to meet the challenges.

The revolution in information and communication technology (ICT) is an important dimension of globalisation. While it is acknowledged that ICT could play an important part in accelerating growth, eradicating poverty and promoting sustainable development in developing countries, the issue of digital divide must be urgently addressed so as to avoid further marginalisation of those who do not have access to it.

*Distinguished Delegates,*

ASEAN was established as a forum for its measures to encourage consultation and co-operation. ASEAN Parliamentarians have a key role to play. They are expected to provide the leadership needed in bringing forth a better life for our constituents and must continue to be the avenue through which the leaders and future leaders of ASEAN can forge strong personal ties. It is our responsibility as Parliamentarians of ASEAN to make our utmost endeavour to perpetuate peace and prosperity in the region. Dialogues at a forum like AIPO with legislators of other countries can contribute towards strengthening goodwill, understanding, peace, stability and prosperity.

I believe that this is a good occasion for us to renew old friendships and make new ones. This is also an occasion for us to share experiences and to seek common goals from differing viewpoints. Therefore it falls on us as members of our legislative bodies to uphold the dignity and the well-being of our regional body and to ensure that peace and prosperity will continue in our region.

On this note, I wish to congratulate the Government of Viet Nam for the excellent organization and arrangement to make this conference a success. I also offer our deep appreciation and gratitude to the people of Viet Nam for their generous and warm hospitality. Lastly, I wish this conference every success.

Thank you. Sin Camon.



# ASEAN Inter - Parliamentary Organization

The 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly

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23GA/2002/Statement/Ph

**Taking the First Step In Our Journey  
Together Toward an ASEAM Parliament**

**Statement of  
Speaker JOSE DE VENECIA**  
House of Representatives  
Republic of the Philippines

**ASEAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY ORGANIZATION  
23<sup>rd</sup> GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

Hanoi, Socialist Republic of Viet Nam  
8 September 2002

*Mr. President,*

The vision of the ASEAN inter-Parliamentary Organization (AIPO) constituting itself into a genuine ASEAN Parliament—the legislature of one united Southeast Asian community— has been on our minds—off-and-on—since AIPO's 3<sup>rd</sup> Conference in Jakarta in 1980.

Over these past 22 years, we have never breached the barrier of indecision. But now events and trends compel our countries to move toward a decision.

Since AIPO's creation, the world has turned over, so to speak, so many times. Across the globe countries are turning increasingly toward unification, driven by the need to manage their growing economic interdependence.

Even as we speak, the 53 nations of Africa are moving resolutely towards the creation of a continent-wide African Union—impelled by the vision to establish a common African Parliament, a Central Bank, a common currency, and an international Court of Justice and to work towards a common defense, foreign and communications policy.

This followed their decision in July last year to transform within a year the Organization of African Unity to the African Union, to be loosely modeled after the European Union.

### **AIPO MUST SHAKE OFF THE PARALYSIS OF INACTION AND INDECISION**

Mr. President, the hour has come for AIPO to shake off the paralysis of indecision and the grip of inaction and establish the beginnings of an ASEAN Parliament.

We must now rise from two decades of stupor—and make the quantum shift from vision to action,

Last year, at our 22nd General Assembly in Bangkok, we reaffirmed our persistent hope of AIPO transforming itself someday into a genuine ASEAN Parliament. And our Assembly concurred with our Philippine proposal to send a team of AIPO parliamentarians—scholars who studied the history, goals and structure of the European Parliament, and the difficulties of organizing one, with independent scholars and experts on European integration in Germany and Belgium over two weeks last March.

### **STUDY ASKS AIPO TO GIVE SUBSTANCE TO OUR VISION OF ASEAM PARLIAMENT**

The Study Group has now finished its Report, which I am honored to submit to this 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly. The Study Group recommends that AIPO constitute an Ad Hoc Committee to give our vision of an ASEAN Parliament its initial shape and substance.

That recommendation, Mr. President, my Delegation would like to move into a formal motion before this 23rd Assembly.

We note with great interest that the six oldest members of ASEAN have unified their tariff rates.

And even while ASEAN was organizing this initial phase of its free trade area—Mr. President—it has also been reaching out to China, Japan, and Korea to offer its vision of an East Asian economic grouping.

I am confident, Mr. President, that we shall have an East Asian Economic Group in place by 2010—and hopefully a full-fledged Asia-Pacific Community a decade after that.

### **HIGHLIGHTS OF THE STUDY FOR AN ASEAN PARLIAMENT**

Mr. President—The Report does not minimize the difficulties of organizing—and operating—a supra-national legislature.

Even now—23 years after it was elected for the first time—the European Parliament is still controversial. Some politicians in some member-states still oppose its further development.

The European Parliament is obliged to operate in three different locations rather than in a single seat. It is also multi-lingual to a degree unknown elsewhere in Europe.

But the Report emphasizes the pragmatic driving force, which drove European integration—and which the Study Group foresees would be our own imperative. And this is our practical need to manage the growing economic interdependence of our countries.

As in Europe, a single Southeast Asian market will require a degree of common policymaking.

A common market needs common rules—and the assurance that everyone will abide by them. It will require not only a level playing field but also some harmonization of the ways in which national governments intervene in the market.

This work of managing, harmonizing, and institutionalizing Southeast Asia's growing interdependence, Mr. President, only a true ASEAN Parliament could undertake. THE

### **EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT HAS HAD TO ASSERT ITSELF TO GET TO WHERE IT IS**

The European Parliament was initially a forum—much as AIPO is—composed of delegations from national parliaments, which the diplomats and bureaucrats running the

European Community's policy-making Council of Ministers and the collegial European Commission consulted from time to time and on a small range of matters,

The European Parliament, Mr. President, has had to assert itself to get where it is today. Little by little it gained a share of budgetary authority—which it has used skillfully to develop policies in new areas of the European economy, its election by universal suffrage—starting in 1979—generated popular interest and greater democratic legitimacy for the European Community as a whole.

The 1999 Treaty of Amsterdam made the European Parliament's vote on the President of the European Commission—the veritable "President of Western Europe"—legally binding, by giving it veto power over the nomination by the European Council of Ministers.

In sum—Mr. President—the European Parliament has both legitimized the system of the European Union and made it more open, more transparent, and more democratic. It has also taken the edge off national conflict and given full expression to Europe's sectoral, political, and cultural pluralism.

### **WHERE WE COULD OURSELVES BEGIN**

Our AIPO Study Group—Mr. President—returned home to our respective capitals convinced that an ASEAN Parliament is imperative for the stability, security, and progress of our region.

But where could we ourselves begin our journey toward unification?

My own feeling—Mr. President—is to begin by exchanging our best legislation and harmonizing them in our separate legislatures to confront our most persistent socio-economic problems. For despite new, amazing prosperity in our region, much of Southeast Asia remains tortured by the evils of the post-colonial era.

By this mechanism of regular exchange, facilitated through the electronic mail we could synchronize some of our legislation in the ASEAN country even now and reinforce the ability of our parliaments to reduce the grinding poverty of our peoples, fight terrorism the drug cartels, and transnational crimes, and address the moral imperatives of human rights and migration.

### **AN ASEAN ANTI-POVERTY-BANK FOR MICRO-LENDING FOR THE POOR**

Fighting poverty remains today the central challenge to our governments.

Early this year, we proposed the creation of an ASEAN Anti-Poverty Bank for micro-lending for the poor of the region to unleash their entrepreneurial potentials.

This lending facility could boost our small entrepreneurs and ultimately help uplift the rural and urban blighted communities across Southeast Asia that have been mired in poverty for decades.

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo adopted this proposal and the Philippine government presented it at the 35<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in Bandar Seri Begawan last July. It has

been tabled for discussion by the ASEAN Finance Ministers and the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Rural Development and Poverty Eradication.

Mr. President, I personally ask our respective parliaments to support this regional anti-poverty initiative.

We in the Philippines—Mr. President—are also searching for the formula to modernize our civil service, cut down corruption in government; and strengthen our political parties, I am sure we could get guidance on how to deal with these issues from the best practices of other ASEAN legislatures.

Now, Mr. President, let us come to our historic and most important task. For we have already entered a unique era that has no precedent in our common history. In their feasibility study for a regional parliament, our scholars have spoken with their sense of history—and their conclusion is unmistakably clear.

Let us pull out all the stops'—and move rapidly to work out the structure for transforming AIPO into our vision of the legislature of one united Southeast Asian community.

Let us now establish an Ad Hoc Committee to draw up a work program and set a practical time table that would enable AIPO to transform itself into a true ASEAN Parliament, at a time frame that, we propose, should be agreed upon next year at the 24<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in Jakarta.

It is an idea whose time has come.

Thank you, Mr. President.



# ASEAN Inter - Parliamentary Organization

The 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly

8-13 September 2002, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

23GA/2002/Statement/Sg

**ADDRESS BY H E MR ABDULLAH TARMUGI  
SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT OF SINGAPORE  
AT 23<sup>RD</sup> AIPO GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
8-13 SEPTEMBER 2002, HANOI**

*Your Excellency, Mr. Nguyen Van An, President of AIPO*

*Distinguished Heads of Delegations*

*Distinguished Delegates and Observers*

*Ladies and Gentlemen*

1. It is indeed an honour for me, to lead, for the first time, the Singapore delegation to the 23rd AIPO General Assembly. Several members of my delegation are newly appointed Members of Parliament and attending their first General Assembly. We therefore hope to learn and gain from the insights and experiences of our more senior colleagues from ASEAN and look forward to engaging our ASEAN counterparts in a frank exchange of views on developments in ASEAN and how we, as Parliamentarians, can support our governments in strengthening this Organization.

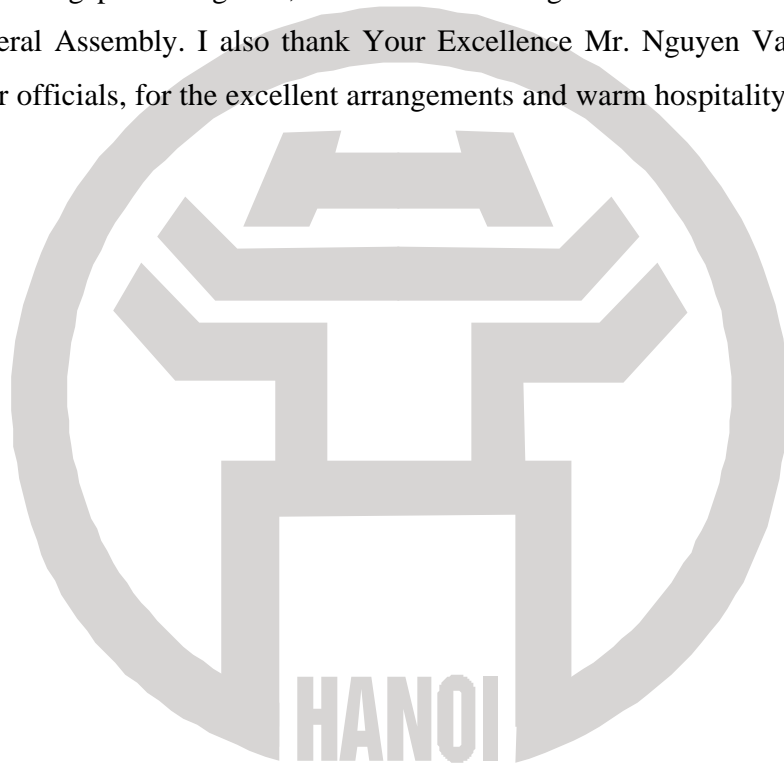
2. As Members of Parliament, we have the primary responsibility of reflecting the interests, aspirations and concerns of our constituents. At the same time, Parliamentarians need to lead their constituents in tackling the challenges that face our countries. Many of the regional issues have global dimensions. As the world becomes a global village, countries and regions have become even more inter-connected and mutually dependent even as they compete among themselves. As a regional grouping we must create and enhance the synergies that our respective countries can contribute to make ASEAN a peaceful and thriving unit. We need to build a broad support base including government, non-government bodies, the business community and the citizenry, so that the initiatives of the ASEAN governments towards these aims can succeed.

*Mr. President,*

3. For some time now, ASEAN has been battling a bruised self-image. It would appear that the glory days of ASEAN are over, even though those outside ASEAN seem to have a more positive outlook of the regional grouping. ASEAN has since undertaken a re-examination of its priorities and how best to position itself in order to stay ahead of the competition. It has set itself a number of targets over the next few years to revitalize itself - developmental integration, greater engagement of dialogue partners and playing a prime mover's role in regional security. These are onerous but crucial tasks. We cannot allow ASEAN to be written off. I believe you would agree with me that these initiatives to remake ASEAN and give it a greater strategic relevance are worthy of our support.
4. Soon it will be one year since the fateful events of September 11. The events of that day have helped galvanized the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and have given it a "shot in the arm". All ARF countries agreed that the ARF should continue to build on the concrete measures it has taken so far to counter terrorism. At the recent AMM in Brunei. ASEAN announced a number of practical and concrete initiatives to further enhance counter-terrorism efforts in the region. These included the ARF Ministerial Statement on Measures against Terrorist Financing and the ASEAN-US Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism. By doing so, the ARF has reaffirmed its importance as the only regional security forum in the Asia Pacific.

5. AIPO is an important platform for us to keep abreast of developments with ASEAN, and the challenges ahead. It also provides us with a useful opportunity to network with colleagues from other Parliaments in the region. The discussions over the next two days will help us gain a better understanding of the issues of the day concerning ASEAN and provide us with the means to examine in detail ASEAN's key initiatives and their implications to the people of ASEAN. At the end of the day, if we can convey a clear signal of our support for and commitment to the various ASEAN initiatives, we would have played an important part in moving ASEAN forward. I look forward to hearing an exchange of views with my colleagues.
  
6. On behalf of the Singapore delegation, I would like to congratulate Vietnam for being host to the AIPO General Assembly. I also thank Your Excellence Mr. Nguyen Van An, President AIPO, and your officials, for the excellent arrangements and warm hospitality accorded to my delegation.

Thank you.





# ASEAN Inter - Parliamentary Organization

The 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly

8-13 September 2002, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

23GA/2002/Statement/Th

## STATEMENT BY

HIS EXCELLENCY MR. UTHAI PIMCHAICHON

PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THAILAND

AND LEADER OF THE THAI DELEGATION

AT THE 23<sup>RD</sup> AIPO GENERAL ASSEMBLY

9 SEPTEMBER 2002

DAEWOO HA NOI HOTEL, HA NOI , VIET NAM

*Your Majesty,  
Excellencies,  
Honourable Parliamentarians,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

On behalf of the Thai Delegation and I, myself, it is my privilege great pleasure for me to participate in this 23<sup>rd</sup> AIPO General Assembly here in Ha Noi, Vietnam. May I first, thank to His Excellency Mr. Nguyen Van An, President of the National Assembly of Viet Nam for

hosting this inspiring Conference. I also would like to take this auspicious opportunity to express my deep appreciation and sincere thank to the National Assembly of Viet Nam and the Vietnamese people for the warm welcome and nice hospitality extend to my Delegation and myself. This is a continuous important event of AIPO after 25 years of its establishment. Delegates from ASEAN member countries and AIPO observer countries come again to join, to share and to exchange views involved various issues concerning our globe, our region, and our peoples which are challenging us to discuss and to seek the mutual appropriate solutions for the next few days of this fruitful Conference and for the years to implement our agreements to become a success.

Up until now, many events have been occurring in our region, some are unexpected and undesired circumstances such as the resentful disputation, the unavoidable conflicts, the attacks, the disasters some of which triggered human by human, themselves and some occurred by the nature, itself. However, the pleasant events still happen, remain and those are embraced either the generating of the new member of the world community, the high technology invention. These innovation and invention are facilitating the information communication, medical and scientific matters to more convenient and safety of our lifestyles. These make us more confident that our region still progress and further move to endless evolution. Therefore, not only appreciated events but also undesirable situations have become the best challenges and greatest experiences for us to push more effort through efficiency and effectively determination. Hence, the more obstacles we counter, the more experiences we gain.

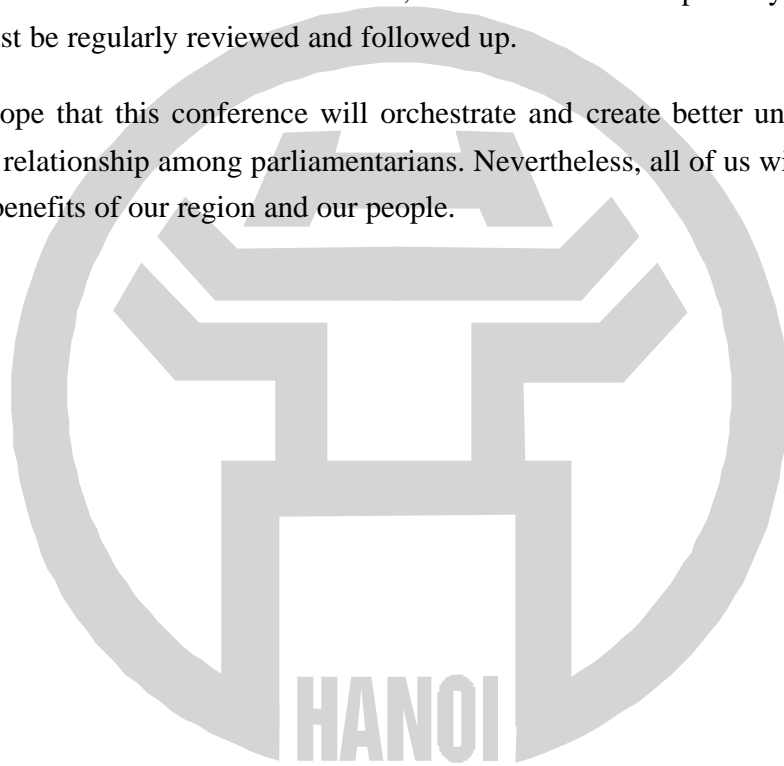
Many ASEAN forums have been initiated to endorse various crucial tasks to the development and strengthen the region or to settle the measurement to guard the region in peace , safety , prosperity and stability as well as to solve the existing problems of the region . Most of those endeavors have generated the powerful and successful outcomes, and are able to negotiate with other parts in the world after many changes within and outside the region. Various policies have been implemented to achieve the aforesaid ultimate destination.

Since the establishment of ASEAN in 1967, its aims is to promote the economic, social, culture, technology, science and administrative cooperation matters, and to stabilize peace and security as well as the well-being of peoples within South East Asia region. After 10 years of the mutual cooperation between legislative body of ASEAN member countries, it has launched the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Organization or AIPO. The organizations have long histories, one represents ASEAN governments another one represents ASEAN parliaments but all of them have worked for the ASEAN region and the well being of their peoples. It has been over decades that ASEAN and AIPO have tried to play their best role in each other.

Allow me refer the latest event of ASEAN- the 35<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in Bandar Seri Begawan, July 2002. Foreign Ministers from ASEAN governments have continuously realized the ASEAN vision 2020 through the implementation of Ha Noi Action Plan by providing an effective step in promoting the initiative and cooperation in economic, social, cultural and the other related fields. They have concrete concerned regarding the further strengthening relationship between ASEAN and other countries over the rest of the world; moreover, they also have paid attention to the bilateral cooperation within ASEAN countries by the project of narrowing the development gap in ASEAN which AIPO is interested in. Therefore, as the ASEAN legislative organization, AIPO member countries should unify for full cooperation with ASEAN and its dialogue partners. AIPO must play its role and devote more contributions in such matters. Besides, the resolutions adopted by AIPO General Assemblies must be regularly reviewed and followed up.

Finally, I do hope that this conference will orchestrate and create better understanding and enhance closer relationship among parliamentarians. Nevertheless, all of us will contribute our efforts for the benefits of our region and our people.

Thank you.





# ASEAN Inter - Parliamentary Organization

The 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly

8-13 September 2002, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

23GA/2002/Statement/Vn

## SPEECH

By H.E. Mr. Truong Quang Duoc

Leader of the Vietnamese Delegation

at the Plenary Session of the 23rd AIPO General Assembly

*Hanoi, September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2002.*

*Honourable Mr. President,*

*Honourable Leaders of Delegations,*

*Distinguished Parliamentarians,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

At the outset, allow me, on behalf of the Vietnamese Delegation, to warmly welcome Honourable Heads and colleagues of AIPO Member Parliaments and regional and non-regional Observer Delegations to Vietnam on the historic autumn days of the August Revolution and the National Day of September 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> AIPO General Assembly takes place in the wake of the successful election of 11<sup>th</sup> National Assembly of Vietnam, the first legislature in the new millennium with the highest turnout ever of 99.73%. This demonstrates increasing confidence of the people in our National

Assembly. The election of 498 deputies represents the great national unity and the wisdom of the people across the country.

With heavy responsibilities in the new millennium, the 11th National Assembly is committed to accelerating the Doi Moi process, strengthening the organization of the State apparatus and its operation and effectively carrying out its own mandates and responsibilities as the organ of supreme power of the State and the people's highest representative body, thus contributing significantly to the building of a law-governed state of Vietnam.

In the last year, assuming the AIPO Presidency, the Vietnamese National Assembly has made important contributions to the development of AIPO, including the accelerated implementation of the 22nd General Assembly's Resolutions through successfully organising the AIPO Fact-Finding Committee to Combat the Drug Menace (AIFOCOM) and the AIPO Ad-hoc Committee on Organisational Matters. We have also made efforts to strengthen AIPO's relations with dialogue partners, such as the European Parliament and Japanese Parliament. In the coming AIPO tenure, the Vietnamese National Assembly remains committed to actively participate in all activities of the Organisation, fully accomplish its responsibilities and put forth new initiatives aimed at strengthening AIPO as well as ASEAN's co-operation mechanisms. AIPO will always stand side by side with the Governments and people of member countries in a "United ASEAN marching into the 21st century" with a view to achieving the goal of building an ASEAN of peace, stability, and prosperity.

*Mr. President,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

During the last year, the region and the world have undergone numerous complex developments, presenting both opportunities and challenges to each individual member country and the Association as a whole. ASEAN therefore must find ways and means to grasp opportunities and surmount challenges to build a brighter future.

Though some countries are still facing internal difficulties, peace and stability remain a major trend in the Southeast Asia, which stands as the biggest opportunity for ASEAN to further deepen integration, expand co-operation, and attract investment from the outside.

As the world economy rebounds, we are delighted to see the recovery and expansion of ASEAN economies in the post-crisis period. However, without efforts to raise competitiveness and quickly narrow the development gap within the Association and between the region and the outside, the danger of lagging further behind will continue to remain the biggest challenge facing ASEAN.

As we all know, ASEAN embracing 10 countries has given rise to new challenges due to the economic development gap among member countries. In view of this, ASEAN leaders have set out various programmes, objectives and initiatives aimed to help the new members catch up with the old group, such as the Vision 2020, the Hanoi Plan of Action, the Initiative of ASEAN Integration and its Roadmap, Declaration on Narrowing the Development Gap and its Action Plan with focus on the four major priorities, including the development of infrastructure, human resources, information technology and regional economic integration. We, legislators, are mandated at this General Assembly to discuss and come up with concrete measures to help member countries meet their commitments under ASEAN's goals and programmes.

In narrowing the development gap, we welcome and call for the support from dialogue partners, especially from Northeast Asia. The recent official visit to Japan by AIPO Parliamentary Delegation serves as a vivid example of the collaboration between parliaments of AIPO member countries and dialogue partners in helping Governments realize cooperation initiatives and programmes.

At this forum, Vietnam calls on AIPO Parliaments, observers and dialogue partners to support Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia to early join the WTO, which is an important step for their integration into the world economy.

*Mr. President,*

*Distinguished Delegates,*

As a result of the September 11 event, the anti-terrorism issue has been put high in the agendas of various international forums. That is also the case of ASEAN. However, the Association has long realized the potential danger posed by terrorism to our region. As early as November 2001, at the 7<sup>th</sup> Summit, ASEAN issued a Declaration on Joint Action to Counter Terrorism. We endorse the view that anti-terrorism activities must be conducted on the basis of respect for international laws, sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-interference, and in accordance with domestic laws and conditions of each nation. Particularly, anti-terrorism co-operation needs to be comprehensive, which includes measures to root out its causes, namely poverty, injustice and oppression.

With regard to regional security, the South China Sea has long been the primary concern of regional countries. AIPO needs to join the Government of member countries in working closely with China to soon issue the Declaration on Conducts of Parties Concerned in the South China Sea, moving one step closer to the finalisation of the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea. Ladies and Gentlemen,

Besides security, political and economic challenges, ASEAN is confronted with extremely severe social problems, namely drugs trafficking, HIV/AIDS, corruption, piracy and so on.

Regarding the abuse and trafficking of women and children, we are of the view that AIPO member countries should review and improve their existing laws and monitor their enforcement while enhancing legal assistance co-operation and taking measures to better protect the rights of this vulnerable group.

We firmly believe that women parliamentarians will play an increasingly important role in the work of ASEAN. We will always work with our women colleagues in the struggle for women's rights of equality and empowerment in the economic, political, social and cultural life.

*Mr. President,*

*Distinguished Delegates,*

Together with the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of ASEAN this year, our AIPO has come to the 25<sup>th</sup> year of its existence. During that time, AIPO has step by step asserted its indispensable role in promoting activities of ASEAN member countries and become a regular forum for Southeast Asian parliamentarians to discuss co-operation policies and plans of the whole Association, which will then be institutionalised by domestic laws. Throughout the development history of AIPO, it is always our wish to see an increasingly strong AIPO that contributes to the work of ASEAN members in all spheres as well as its enhanced position in the international arena with a voice heard in other regional and global inter-parliamentary forums.

*Mr. President.*

*Distinguished Delegates,*

We hope that the 23rd General Assembly will be a good forum for parliamentarians to discuss issues of mutual concern, especially ways to effectively improve AIPO's performance. In its new stage of development, we believe that AIPO will make greater strides to provide effective support for ASEAN Governments and people in their efforts to build an ASEAN of peace, stability and prosperity in the 21st century.

Thank you for your attention.



# ASEAN Inter - Parliamentary Organization

The 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly

8-13 September 2002, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

23GA/2002/Statement/Bn

Address by

**H.E. YANG AMAT MULIA PENGIRAN INDERA MAHKOTA**

**PENGIRAN ANAK HAJI KEK1ALUDIN**

**(Privy Councilor and Head of Delegation of Brunei Darussalam)**

*His Excellency Mr. Nguyen Van An,*

*President of the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the President of AIPO*

*Distinguished Delegates*

*Ladies and Gentlemen*

Let me first express my sincere appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Tran Duc Luong, the President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, for his inspiring remarks to mark the occasion of the 23<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN Inter -Parliamentary Organisation General Assembly.

May I also express our thanks and gratitude to you, Mr. President, and the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam for the kind invitation extended to Brunei Darussalam to attend the Assembly and giving us the opportunity of meeting once again the distinguished members of AIPO.

Our thanks and gratitude to the People and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam for their warm welcome and hospitality extended to my delegation and me during our stay in this beautiful city of Hanoi.

It gives us a great pleasure to once again participate in this annual conference. Our attendance this year, I feel is of particular significance to our delegation, in view of Brunei Darussalam's role in hosting the 7th ASEAN Summit in November 2001 and the 35<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMM) in July this year. These meetings have been the most important events in ASEAN calendar and Brunei Darussalam has been very pleased to play a major role in seeing that ASEAN remains as an important regional body. Brunei Darussalam will again host another important regional event this month that is the 34<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Economic Ministers Meeting (AEMM) from 11 to 15 September 2002. Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates

This year marks the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ASEAN. Over these long years ASEAN has gone through many challenges. The commitments of member states towards closer cooperation and understandings have ensured that ASEAN responds well to these challenges and remains as a continuing relevant body in the region.

The year 2002 is also significant to ASEAN with the launching of the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA). The ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) and the ASEAN Investment Area (AIA) have been the means by which ASEAN has tried to compete for investments and markets. ASEAN must move rapidly to ensure that events outside ASEAN control would not affect its ability to attract investment and gain access to markets.

In addition, ASEAN has to recognise the full implications of globalisation and ever-increasing competition, if ASEAN wants to cope with tomorrow's level of competition.

Central to these efforts is the ASEAN Initiative for Integration (IAI) especially in narrowing the development gap between the old and the new members of ASEAN. In this regard, we welcome the decision of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers to adopt an IAI Work Plan for assisting the new member of ASEAN, and the launching of the Joint Initiative among ASEAN 6. Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates

While ASEAN is preoccupied with its domestic priorities, it cannot but remains outward looking. ASEAN is open to trade, economic links and security dialogues with others. It welcomes cooperation for development with other countries and group of countries and with other international organisations. It is for this purpose that ASEAN has continued to maintain good relations with its dialogue partners.

Finally, Mr. President, I am convinced that with greater cohesion and unity that ASEAN has shown over the years since its formation in 1967, we would be able to face whatever challenges ahead of us and look forward to many more years of successful ASEAN.

Thank you.





# ASEAN Inter - Parliamentary Organization

The 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly

8-13 September 2002, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

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23GA/2002/Statement/Mn

**STATEMENT BY**  
HIS EXCELLENCY U AUNG TOE LEADER OF THE SPECIAL OBSERVER  
DELEGATION OF  
THE UNION OF MYANMAR  
AT THE 23RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE  
ASEAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY ORGANIZATION

*Hanoi, Viet Nam, 8<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> September 2002*

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*Esteemed Mr. President,*

*Distinguished Delegates,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

I am pleased and honoured to have the opportunity to address this august Assembly as the leader of Myanmar Special Observer Delegation at the 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly of the ASEAN Inter-parliamentary Organization.

I would like first of all to express our appreciation to the Government and the people of Viet Nam for the warm welcome and gracious hospitality accorded to our delegation. The friendly atmosphere and beautiful surroundings of Ha Noi augurs well for the success of the meeting.

In Myanmar, we are striving to develop our country practicing market oriented economic system and inviting foreign direct investment leading to progress of science and technology and human resources development.

The Government of Myanmar, aware that nation building cannot succeed unless peace and tranquility prevails in the State, has accorded priority to the establishment of peace and tranquility. Myanmar has twice a battleground in World War II and experienced insurgency for four decades. The Government is striving to establish a modernization where all the national races live in peace and harmony. While promoting national unity we are laying firm foundation for a modern nation. The country's basic infrastructure is being developed. At present, the State has been implementing a five-year short-term economic plan from 2001-2002 to 2005-2006. We are confident that the plan will achieve its objective.

*Mr. President,*

Myanmar, since becoming a member of ASEAN in 1997, has been cooperating with other ASEAN countries in many fields including economic, culture, communications, environment, science and technology, narcotic drugs and transnational crimes.

At present, the Government is striving not only to prevent and eradicate narcotic drugs but is also cooperating with local peoples, to overcome the root causes. The Government has been focusing on regional development. In order to improve the living standards of local people, the Government has initiated livestock breeding and crops substitute projects. It has also nurtured national unity. Today, the national races have come to realize the goodwill of the State. As a result large quantities of poppy seeds have been voluntarily surrendered to the Government. Moreover, the national races are cooperating with the Government to implement the 15-year Narcotics Elimination Plan.

The 15-year master plan has five components, namely: eradication of drug production; demand reduction; enforcement; mobilization of people's participation and international cooperation. Myanmar as a responsible member of the family of nations will continue to cooperate with neighbouring countries in the region and the international community at large to eliminate narcotic drugs.

At the same time, I wish to say that the international community's assistance and the cooperation of friendly countries would certainly augment the momentum of our efforts in eliminating narcotic drugs.

The inflow of chemicals, paraphernalia used in drug production, expertise and the capital investment are obstructing efforts of the Myanmar people to eradicate narcotics. In order to meet the challenges the Government has promulgated the Control of Money Laundering Law and the decrees concerning controlled precursor chemicals that can be used in the production of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, with a view to taking legal action.

The Government has also subscribed the list of crimes relating to the aforementioned law, such as crimes on narcotic and psychotropic substances, illicit trafficking of women and children, people smuggling, terrorism and transnational crimes.

*Mr. President,*

In Myanmar society, women enjoy the same rights as men and there is no discrimination. In the country's history there have been many outstanding women in the religious, economic, social and cultural fields. In contemporary times, Myanmar women are participating actively in the social organizations.

The Myanmar National Working Committee for Women's Affairs which was established in 1996 serves the country as a national force uniting women. The MNWCWA is carrying out a Plan of Action for development of the role of Myanmar women, in accordance with the 1995 Beijing Declaration. Myanmar is also acceded to the 1997. -Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). In Myanmar, illicit trafficking of Myanmar women is protected not only administratively and legally but also socially, culturally and traditionally.

Myanmar is also cooperating with the international community including the UN system in many fields. Human Rights Special Rapporteur Professor Sergio Pinheiro was allowed into the country and was taken to various parts of the nation. Similarly, the ILO High Level Team led by former Governor-General of Australia was able to freely visit many areas without hindrance. In this way, Myanmar was able to show to the international community that allegations of widespread human rights abuses and instances of forced labour are without foundation.

*Mr. President and Distinguished delegates,*

To conclude, I would like to reaffirm that we are striving, hand in hand with the entire people, for the emergence of a peaceful, modern and developed nation. At the same time Myanmar is taking an active role in sub-regional, regional and international affairs.

Thank you Mr. President.





# ASEAN Inter - Parliamentary Organization

The 23rd General Assembly

8-13 September 2002, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

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23GA/2002/Statement/GH

## SPEECH

by Dato' Ahmad Mokhtar Selat

Deputy Secretary General of ASEAN

At the 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Organization

September 8-13, 2002, Hanoi, Viet Nam

*Your Excellency Mr. President,  
Your Excellencies Heads of Delegations,  
AIPO Members and Observer Countries,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and gentlemen.*

It is indeed a great honour for me, representing the ASEAN Secretariat, to be given the opportunity to deliver a statement at the 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Organization (AIPO). I have also been informed that the Parliamentarians of the ASEAN Dialogue Partners have also been invited to this august Assembly, Separate dialogue sessions will be held with them. This will certainly contribute to better co-operation and understanding between ASEAN and our dialogue partners.

*Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

ASEAN has just celebrated its 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Its achievements, over the years are many. It suffices for me to highlight a few of them,

It is most gratifying to note that the ten countries in South East Asia are now members of ASEAN. It began only with 5 member countries in 1967 comprising Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. The dream of our founding fathers has been realized. All the member countries are now "acting in concert and existing in peace with each other" as envisaged by the founding fathers.

*Excellencies,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Interstate relation among the 10 ASEAN member states is marked by understanding and co-operation. This positive environment have made it possible for ASEAN to press ahead with the region's political, security, economic and development co-operation agenda. Throughout ASEAN's history, there have never been any armed conflicts among the member countries. Minor irritants were solved through dialogues and were never allowed to harm ASEAN and regional co-operation. Consensus building and confidence building measures were constructed by consolidating areas of agreement. Areas of disagreement were set aside and over time became areas of common agreement. This is what we call the ASEAN way of doing things that have been emulated by other regional Organizations in the developing world. We now have the ASEAN minus x principle, Two or more ASEAN countries could proceed with any agreement or collaborative efforts. The rest may join when they are ready or comfortable to do so.

The 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2002 was an important landmark in the history of regional economic integration, Each of the 6 original signatories to the ASEAN Free Trade Area, namely Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand brought down their tariffs on almost all their trade with one another to 0-5% This was implemented 6 year? Ahead of schedule. Besides from the standpoint of trade, the event was indeed an important milestone. It marked the implementation of a rule-based co-operation in ASEAN.

Besides AFTA, other support measures have been taken to keep pace with the liberalization of trade in goods, Custom procedures are being reformed and streamlined. Tariff nomenclature and product standards are being harmonized. Co-operation in transportation and communications networks is being intensified. An ambitious rail-project linking Singapore with Kunming in China is in the pipeline.

Tourism in general and intra ASEAN tourism in particular is being promoted. An ASEAN Tourism Agreement will be signed by the ASEAN 10 at the forthcoming ASEAN Summit

scheduled in November. Visa-Free travel to facilitate ASEAN citizen to travel to any of the ASEAN country is being initiated. The ASEAN region has a lot to offer - Borobudur, Angkor Wat, Sukuthai and Bagan, the Petronas Twin Towers, the beautiful beaches and mountain resorts. The list is quite long!!

*Excellencies,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

ASEAN realizes that there exist development gaps among the member countries and are taking positive measures to narrow them. ASEAN has adopted the Initiative for ASEAN Integration work plan specially designed for the development needs of the newer member countries. The plan focuses on 4 priority areas namely - Infrastructure, human resource development, information and communications technology and capacity building for regional economic integration. This is an ambitious project that needs the support of all the 50 member countries, that needs the support of all our dialogue partners, that needs the support of institutions like the ADB, UNDP and World Bank.

The ASEAN Parliamentarians certainly have a role in realizing these initiatives. Parliamentarians from the newer member countries can ensure that these plans are given high priority in their development plans. Parliamentarians from the older member countries can ensure that assistance be sustained.

*Excellencies,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

In ASEAN there also exists functional co-operation that transcends national boundaries, ranging from measures to mitigate the social impact of the recent economic crisis, to mitigate environmental pollution, to control and prevent HIV/AIDS and so on. We have the mechanism in ASEAN to address all these issues.

*Excellencies,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

In recent months transnational crime, particularly terrorism, has taken centre stage in international relations. I should underline here that ASEAN recognized this menace and took proactive measures well before the 11<sup>th</sup> September incident. Way back in 1999 the Home Affairs/Interior Ministers of ASEAN established an ASEAN mechanism to collectively deal with the scourges. They recognized that the problem of terrorism has to be holistically handled as it is closely linked to other forms of transnational crime like drug trafficking, trafficking in

persons, arms smuggling, money laundering, piracy, cyber crime and international economic crime. As such they should be dealt with in tandem with each other. As for terrorism, there is a need to identify and eliminate the root causes, Without addressing them, the fight might not succeed.

*Excellencies,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

ASEAN believes that the fight against terrorism should be consistent with international law and UN Resolutions. It is a global problem and cannot be solved unilaterally.

*Excellencies,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Since this is an Assembly of ASEAN Parliamentarians, may I also take this opportunity to bring to the fore the role of Parliamentarians in promoting the image of ASEAN, At the domestic level. The perception that ASEAN is the business of politicians and bureaucrats should be debunked. We have to inform the public that ASEAN brings economic opportunities to them. We have to bring our argument to the lowest common denominator, that ASEAN would benefit the common man - the investors, the traders, the hoteliers, the tour agencies, the exporters, the importers and so on.

At the international level, ASEAN parliamentarians should project ASEAN as a vibrant and outlooking regional organization wedded to the principle of free trade. That ASEAN is a single investment area, a single market and a single tourist destination should be highlighted.

The following factors could fortify such assertions. there is peace and stability in the region, ensuring security to their investments. AFTA ensures free movement of goods manufactured in the ASEAN region at minimum tariff rates of 0.5%. All the 10 member countries are endowed with natural resources. ASEAN has a market of half a billion people. ASEAN's neighbours are the economical vibrant economies of China, Korea and Japan. ASEAN could be used as a bridge to these economies.

*Excellencies,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Thank you for your attention. I wish the Assembly success.

Thank you and "Cam on" in Vietnamese.



# ASEAN Inter - Parliamentary Organization

The 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly

8-13 September 2002, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

23GA/2002/Statement/Au

*Mr. President,  
Heads of Delegations,  
Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen.*

On behalf of the Australian Parliament and the Australian delegation, I have pleasure in addressing the 23rd AIPO General Assembly. During the next few days, I and my colleagues look forward to meeting with you and discussing issues of mutual concern.

Australia values its relationship and is a strong supporter of our ASEAN neighbours. In 2002-03 Australian aid to ASEAN countries is an estimated \$376 million. This funding supports various ASEAN countries to provide a range of essential services such as health, water supply and basic education and training. In addition, the ASEAN-Australia Development Cooperation program (AADCP), worth \$45 million over 5 years, seeks to strengthen economic integration particularly with newer ASEAN member countries.

Since the Asian financial crisis of 1997, ASEAN countries have sought to strengthen and improve their economic performance. We encourage you to continue with economic and trade reforms so that individually and as a regional community we can benefit from the opportunities of globalisation. Trade and investment between Australia and ASEAN countries is significant. Since 1997 two way trade in merchandise between Australia and ASEAN has increased by 49% from A\$22 billion to A\$33 billion. From 1997 to 2001 ASEAN exports to

Australia increased 91% to A\$17.5 billion. In the same period, Australia's exports to ASEAN increased 19% to A\$15.4 billion. In 2001 Australian investment in ASEAN was A\$20 billion. In the same period, ASEAN investment in Australia increased by nearly 2.5 times to reach A\$30 billion.

The prospect of enhanced trade relations within the region will help in delivering greater prosperity for the people of the region. In particular, Australia welcomes progress to date with the development of the AFTA-CER Closer Economic Partnership.

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

The social challenges before us are just as important as economic and trade issues. The threat posed by HIV/AIDS requires constant vigilance in finding ways to counter the spread of the disease. In October 2001 Australia hosted the regional meeting of Asian-Pacific Ministers. One of the outcomes of this meeting was the establishment of the Asia Pacific leadership forum on HIV/AIDS and Development. Starting in 2002-03 Australia will implement a four year \$9.6 million program to strengthen the capacity of governments and communities to reduce HIV transmission associated with drug use.

Illegal immigration and people smuggling continue to remain a global concern. The proceeds from people smuggling and trafficking are estimated at some \$10 billion per annum. A concerted effort is required to confront and stop people smuggling. In particular, the Ball Ministerial Conference held in February 2002 and attended by 38 Ministers or ministerial level representatives representing 36 countries helped to develop support in the region for a collective response to combat people smuggling.

As part of the broader commitment by the Australian Government to combat people trafficking, the Asia regional program will begin implementing a \$7 million project to improve regional cooperation to stamp out illegal trafficking. The project will have a particular focus on improving regional legal frameworks and their implementation.

Australia recognises that education and training are fundamental to the development process and help to enhance prosperity. In 2002-03 Australia will spend an estimated \$280 million through the overseas aid program in the education sector. The application of information communication technologies (ICT) are particularly relevant to delivering and enhancing education and training programs.

In August 2001, the Australian Government and the World Bank launched the Virtual Colombo Plan which aims to improve education and access to knowledge in developing

countries, through distance education and support for policy development using ICTs. Australia will contribute \$200 million to this project over five years.

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

The tragic and profound events of 11 September have required us to reassess our approach and cooperation to issues of regional security. The threat posed by terrorism has highlighted the need for effective bilateral, regional and international cooperation across a wide range of areas including diplomatic, security, legal, law enforcement and defence.

Australia is strongly committed to playing its part in supporting the ongoing campaign against terrorism in the Asia Pacific region and more broadly. We have negotiated bilateral counter-terrorism MOUs with several of our key partners in South East Asia and are keen to strengthen the capacity of regional bodies, such as the ASEAN Regional Forum, to address the key problem in an integrated manner. We welcome the measures ASEAN has already taken against terrorism, such as concluding an agreement with the United States to combat international terrorism.

Ladies and Gentlemen, in conclusion, and on behalf of the Australian delegation, I would like to thank the people of Vietnam for their warm hospitality and the organisation of this conference. I am proud to represent the Australian Parliament and I have great pleasure in meeting with our ASEAN friends.

**Hon Ian Causley, MP**

**Leader of the Australian Delegation**



# ASEAN Inter - Parliamentary Organization

The 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly

8-13 September 2002, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

.23GA/2002/Statement/Ca

MR. BYRON WILLFERT,  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT,  
CO-CHAIR TO THE CANADA-JAPAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY GROUP AND  
PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

## **Speech to the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Organization's General Assembly 2002**

I take great pleasure in attending this conference as it offers five days of insightful discussion on topics which are both fascinating and internationally significant to all parliamentarians and the countries which we represent. Canada's ties to ASEAN remain strong and our relationship continues to be mutually beneficial as we work together to maintain a vibrant future with the ASEAN nations. I am happy to say that this will be my second AIPO conference and that I take pride in representing Canada at such a potentially advantageous conference. Gatherings such as these serve to demonstrate Canada's similarities to a region as harmonious and diverse as ASEAN and can act as positive turning points for our partnership as well as those between Canada and AIPO's other Observer countries.

Canada congratulates ASEAN on the successful establishment of the ASEAN Free Trade Agreement. This confirms the resurgence of the ASEAN economies as tigers on a global scale and is a symbolic milestone of Asia's progress. In this day and age, stability is of the utmost importance. Multilateral agreements and cooperation are our best bet in terms of supporting a

productive and stable Southeast Asia and are a powerful weapon against those forces which seek chaos above order,

On a similar note, the measures Canada has taken to extend completely duty and quota-free access to virtually all of our markets for 48 Least-Developed Countries as of 2003 will further increase trade between Canada and the ASEAN region. As well, through APEC's Economic Integration Program we are helping in the integration of 6 ASEAN nations into the worldwide economy with assistance on WTO accession and knowledge-sharing related to the ASEAN Free Trade Agreement and based on many years of NAFTA participation.

While on an organizational level, the Canada-ASEAN economic and development relationship has been on hold since the 11<sup>th</sup> session of our Joint-Cooperation Committee was held in Montreal, the Canadian International Development Agency, CIDA, has maintained bilateral and multilateral commitments to the Southeast Asian countries. Canada, acting through this development agency, is looking towards the increased sharing of profits and responsibilities with ASEAN through the co-funding of certain development initiatives. In essence, Canada is trying to transform our relationship into one of mutual assistance and financial benefit. This transformation should provide a catalyst for the revitalisation and broadening of the ASEAN-Canada relationship.

Nonetheless, our partnership stretches far beyond the bounds of economic ties as we collaborate on pressing issues ranging from counterterrorism to the environment language training to drug-control. Canada's utmost priority has always been the safeguarding of human rights, a goal to be headed closely as governments attempt to clamp down on their countries' criminal underbellies.

Over the past year, as the chair of the G8 and in accordance with our shared interests, Canada championed sustainable development, antiterrorism and drug and arms control. We sincerely hope that these topics remain at the forefront of the ASEAN agenda. The World Summit on Sustainable Development, recently held in Africa, reminded the world of the importance we must place on improving the lives of all global citizens while respecting our natural resources. At the same time, issues such as a transnational crime, including trafficking in human beings, illegal migration, counterfeit medicine and economic crimes, must not be overlooked. We applaud ASEAN's determination to make the region free from drugs by 2015 and will do our part in helping to achieve this goal. In addition Canada hopes that the agreement signed between ASEAN and the United States on counter-terrorism is only the beginning of an international trend towards multilateral solutions to the terrible problem illustrated so graphically on September 11th of last year.

Finally, I hope that ASEAN will capitalise on all of the promise shown by the Southeast Asian Region and noted by the rest of the world in recent months and will remain a bastion of peace

and security in the Asia Pacific Region. As each of our countries follow their futures through the 21<sup>st</sup> century, I trust our similar goals will allow us to exercise determination as one in order to overcome the various challenges we will surely face.





# ASEAN Inter - Parliamentary Organization

The 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly

8-13 September 2002, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

23GA/2002/Statement/Cn

## SPEECH

by **HE Mr. Li Daoyu, Member of the Standing  
Committee of the National People's Congress of  
the People's Republic of China at the 23rd AIPO General Assembly**

9 September 2002, Hanoi

*Mr. President,*

*Dear Colleagues,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

First of all, please allow me, on behalf of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China to extend our warm congratulations to the convening of the 23rd AIPO General Assembly and express our sincere gratitude to HE Nguyen Van An, President of the National Assembly of the Socialist republic of Vietnam for inviting us as observers to participate in this Assembly.

Since its establishment, AIPO has made great efforts to promote mutual understanding and co-operation among its member parliaments, and enhance exchanges with other parliaments. All these have made great achievements, for which we express our warm congratulations. We also sincerely wish tills General Assembly a complete success.

Since the last AIPO General Assembly, China's relations with ASEAN countries have grown rapidly. There have been constant exchanges of high level visits, remarkable increase of mutual trust in political arena and continuous growth of economic co-operation and trade. China's overall relationship with ASEAN has attained a new momentum of development. On the parliamentary side, the National People's Congress of China and member parliaments of ASEAN have kept close and friendly contacts and co-operation, including frequent high level visits. Particularly, parliamentarians of ASEAN member countries, joining other Asian parliamentarians, attended the 3rd General Assembly of the Association of Asian Parliaments For Peace (AAPP) which was held in Beijing and Chongqing, China in April this year. With joint efforts of all participants, The Chongqing Declaration has been successfully adopted by that General Assembly, with peace and development as its principal theme, reflecting viewpoints of the leaders of Asian Parliaments on various issues which are common concern to the peoples in Asia and the world. The next General Assembly of AAPP is to be held in the Philippines in 2003, which will as we wish definitely be a great success.

ASEAN is an important force in Asia Pacific region and plays a remarkable role in international affairs. As the biggest neighbor country of ASEAN, China has, as always set store by and supported the development of ASEAN and its integration process. China hopes to see a more united, stable and prosperous ASEAN and will do its best to contribute to strengthening the peace and development of South East Asia. We believe that, through our joint efforts, the China-ASEAN Partnership of Good Neighborliness and Mutual Trust will make new progress.

*Mr. President,*

The past year witnessed turbulence in international situation. Non-traditional security issues such as terrorism have become cause for common concern, posing a new threat to regional and international security. The Asia Pacific region has also undergone the most profound changes in the post Cold-War period. At the same time, we have noted that overall trend towards peace and development remains unchanged, and to maintain stability and develop economy is still the major policy orientation for most countries in the region. During the first half of this year, the world economic situation has taken a turn for the better, and the East Asian economies have emerged with a rebound.

At the present, the regional co-operation has remarkably picked up speed with dynamism and vitality, which has become a prominent feature of the current regional development. ASEAN is steadily marching towards its integration. Meanwhile, Shanghai Co-operation Organization has scored new achievements, the First Foreign Minister' Informal Meeting of Asia Co-operation Dialogue was successfully held, and the annual meeting of Boao Forum for Asia

was officially launched. Negotiation and development of various bilateral and multilateral free trade areas have also injected new vitality into Asian co-operation. Seeking development and peace through co-operation has become a common aspiration for more and more Asian countries.

*Mr. President,*

In the past year, China's economy maintained a rapid and sound growth. It is believed that 7% of growth rate for this year can be achieved. China's development is not only its intrinsic need, it also contributes to the development in Asia and the world at large. As a neighbor and trade and investment partner of China, ASEAN will be the first to benefit from China's growth. Some leaders of ASEAN member countries have acknowledged China's economic achievement and its contribution to the regional economy in their recent statements, emphasizing that China's growth means new development opportunity for South East Asia instead of challenges. This far-sighted judgement is based on the reality. China is prepared to strengthen its multi-dimensional co-operation with ASEAN on the basis of mutual benefit and win-win solution for all so as to bring our bilateral ties to a new high.

We are fully convinced that as long as we make joint efforts to enhance co-operation and promote development, lasting peace, stability and prosperity in East Asia will certainly be brought about.

Thank you.



# ASEAN Inter - Parliamentary Organization

The 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly

8-13 September 2002, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

23GA/2002/Statement/EP

STATEMENT BY MR. HARTMUT NASSAUER, LEADER OF THE  
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DELEGATION

*Mr. President,*

*Distinguished Members of the AIPO General Assembly,*

*Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It is for me a great honour to represent the European Parliament in this Assembly. These last two years, I have already had the pleasure to attend the 21st and 22nd General Assemblies in Singapore and Bangkok; on these occasions, I appreciated the high quality of the debates and realised the importance that the European Union be present in this inter-parliamentary Forum.

It is therefore important, in my view, that this year in Hanoi the European Parliament is represented by a delegation of five Members, coming from 4 different Member States of the European Union and representing different political groupings.

We very much look forward to the opportunity of meeting our Asian colleagues in order to discuss matters that are important to ASEAN and to the European Union.

Ours is a long-standing relationship: the Union was one of ASEAN's first dialogue partners, and our links were institutionalised already in 1980, with the signing of the EU/ASEAN co-operation agreement; parliamentary links also have been intense and rewarding.

Europe looks with great interest at developments in East Asia: political stability and economic growth in your area are felt to be crucial for the future of security and prosperity at a global level.

Therefore, we strongly support regional integration within ASEAN, and we consider that our bilateral co-operation programmes can contribute in that direction.

EC/ASEAN co-operation, as you know, is quite active, and ongoing projects include initiatives such as:

- the ASEAN Regional Centre for Biodiversity Conservation in Manila
- the EC-ASEAN COGEN III (Energy Co-operation) Programme
- the EC-ASEAN Energy Facility
- the EU-ASEAN Intellectual Property Rights Programme
- the ASEAN-EU University Network Programme

While other projects are in active preparation. It is however clear, in our opinion, that the so-called "New Dynamic" in EU/ASEAN relations, launched in 1999, urgently needs to receive a new momentum.

The European Union itself is now approaching a very challenging period, in which internal constitutional reform and enlargement will have to be dealt with simultaneously and in parallel: we are therefore very sympathetic towards all initiatives aimed at deepening co-operation within ASEAN, and strengthening its institutional framework.

We know in particular that suggestions are made for creating an ASEAN Parliament, and we are honoured by the fact that our European Parliament seems to have given some inspiration in this direction.

We look favourably also towards the increased co-operation between ASEAN and its East Asian partners, in the framework of ASEAN + 3, and to the projects for an ASEAN-China Free Trade Area and an ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership.

I would like however to briefly elaborate on what should be, in my view, our central subjects for discussion: ASEAN/EU co-operation has still not reached a level which corresponds to the potentials of our regions. We need more trade, more investments, more exchanges at cultural and academic level, more people-to-people links.

We know the difficulties we had in the past in keeping momentum for co-operation, including the difficulties in convening Ministerial and Joint Co-operation Meetings. I trust that positive approaches have been found in order to overcome these difficulties, and in particular that it will be possible for the next EU-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting to take place in Europe as soon as possible in 2003.

Our regions need sustained economic growth in order to provide employment, to relaunch investments and to tackle social problems; in our view, democracy and respect for human rights are central elements ensuring balanced development of our societies and, in the end, the best guarantees for economic and social well-being.

Our experience in regional integration was built around those values and parliamentary democracy constitutes, in our view, an essential element of this development; for these reasons, also, we strongly value co-operation and dialogue between parliamentarians, such as this AIPO Assembly or the recent ASEP II meeting in Manila.

Dear Friends, I believe that in the next days we, as parliamentarians, will have the difficult task to try and give inspiration to our governments and public opinion on a wide series of subjects, ranging from global security issues to the fight against trafficking in people and drugs, to furthering sustainable development and economic and trade co-operation.

But, in particular, as representatives of the European Parliament and an observer Delegation to this meeting, we would like to assure our friends from ASEAN of our strongest support in their efforts for integration, and stress once again that EU-ASEAN co-operation should keep this element as a key priority in the elaboration of a programme for future activities.

May I extend therefore, in the name of the European Parliament, my best wishes of success for the 23rd AIPO General Assembly.



# ASEAN Inter - Parliamentary Organization

The 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly

8-13 September 2002, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

23GA/2002/Statement/Jp

## ADDRESS

by **Mr. Koji Morimoto,**

**Leader of the Japanese Delegation**

*Your Excellency Mr. Nguuyen Van An, President of AIPO,  
Delegates from AIPO Member Countries,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Today I have the honour of addressing you, representing the House of Councillors of the Japanese Diet.

First, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the invitation extended to us to attend this 23<sup>rd</sup> general conference of AIPO, and appreciate the warm reception extended to us by the delegates of the countries of AIPO. Let me offer my sincere compliments to all concerned for their efforts in successfully staging the general conference in Hanoi, which abounds in greenery, dotted with beautiful lakes and blessed with the beauties of nature.

In twenty-five years since its founding, AIPO has made a great contribution to the promotion of friendship and co-operation in the region it covers as an inter-parliamentary organization of ASEAN countries. At the same time, ASEAN has also achieved spectacular progress in varied fields.

The existence of ASEAN is expected to become increasingly significant as one of the poles having a great influence over the world economy. However, ASEAN is still in the stage of developing. We should accept that economic gaps and other problems involved in the development of the entire region still remain to be solved. We realize that Japan, whose gross domestic product accounts for some 60 percent of the combined total GDP of Asia, should play a due role in this region through trade, investment, economic co-operation and other means, to propel the growth of ASEAN for the further development of ASEAN countries. Japan gives priority to the region of Asia in offering bilateral official development assistance. Japan's bilateral ODA provided to Asian countries accounts for more than 50 percent of the total, and the amount which goes to the 10 ASEAN countries is some 30 percent. Our country intends to take a firm stand to achieve balanced development and prosperity in the entire ASEAN region by continuously offering economic co-operation to this region.

Japan, now caught in the economic slump which has been continuing for some 10 years, faces many difficulties, socially and economically. We need to promote structural reform in every aspect of our society, and recover from the depressed economy without delay. We are determined to do our best to recover self-confidence and trust and by doing so, meet the strong expectations of all the ASEAN countries.

Relations between Japan and the ASEAN countries have now become broader, not limited to economy. In January this year Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi made a tour of Southeast Asian countries and proposed naming 2003 "ASEAN Exchange Year", as an initiative for "co-operation for the future." The proposal is intended to plan and put into practice various exchange projects and activities in political, economic, cultural and other fields of a wider scope, and enhance the relations of friendship and co-operation between Japan and the ASEAN in the spirit of "act together - advance together".

Progress in exchanges among parliamentarians, not to mention the government - level exchanges, is indispensable for Japan and the ASEAN to achieve hand - in - hand development. In May of this year, an official visit to Japan by the delegation of ALPO parliamentarians, headed by President Nguyen Van An of the National Assembly of Vietnam, was made at the invitation of President Hiroyuki Kurata of the House of Councillors. While they were staying in Japan, they had chances to have talks with many Japanese parliamentarians. Taking this opportunity of their highly productive visit to Japan, and realizing anew the significance of dialogue and exchanges with AIPO, we founded "The House of Councillors' Parliamentarians' League for the Promotion of the Dialogue with AIPO" with the purpose of promoting these activities. President Kurata of the House of Councillors assumed the honorary presidency of the league and I myself was elected vice president. I

firmly believe that through active exchanges among parliamentarians, based on mutual trust, the relations between ASEAN and Japan will mature.

*Ladies and Gentlemen*

Asia is a fascinating region, with its long history and traditions, and its rich variety of cultures and races. It is our duty as parliamentarians to do our best to secure peace and prosperity in this splendid region now and in the future. Concluding my address, I would like to stress our determination to continue active participation in AIPO activities by maintaining and strengthening close relations of co-operation with ASEAN for the further stability and development of ASEAN countries and all of Asia.

Thank you very much.





# ASEAN Inter - Parliamentary Organization

The 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly

8-13 September 2002, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

23GA/2002/Statement/Kr

## STATEMENTS

by **Yu Jae Kyu** Member of the National Assembly

**the Republic of Korea**

**ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Organization (AIPO)**

**The 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly**

*9<sup>th</sup> September 2002 Hanoi, Socialist Republic of Vietnam*

*Honourable Chairman,*

*Distinguished delegates,*

It is truly a great honour to speak before you on behalf of the Republic of Korea in the 23<sup>rd</sup> AIPO being hosted in Vietnam upon the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between Korea and Vietnam. I would like to extend my deepest appreciation to the Vietnamese National Assembly and the Vietnamese people for their warm hospitality.

*Distinguished delegates!*

For the past year since the closing of the 22<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly of the AIPO, terrorism and fight against terrorism have dominated the international society and politics. The world came

together to voice criticism against terrorism as anti-humanitarian act of crime which destroys human dignity and the global community.

All of us who love peace must continue to work together to remove terrorism from the top agenda of future international conferences. Furthermore, all international issues which threaten mankind's peace and prosperity must also be jointly addressed by all countries. Such issues include conflicts surrounding regions, religions, and territories; poverty and the wealth gap; AID and other infectious diseases; and destruction of the environment. I am sure that you all agree with me on this matter.

However, with regard to substantial practice, the unfortunate reality of today's international community is that countries tend to fall into egoism in the name of protecting national interest. Let us not forget the old Chinese proverb, "When your lip gets injured, your teeth ache"

Now I'd like to briefly touch upon inter-Korean relations, a key matter of interest with regard to the security of the Asian region.

The security situation of the Korean peninsula showed signs of reconciliation with the implementation of the South Korean government's engagement policy and with the actualization of the historic inter-Korean summit meeting in June 2000.

However, in the wake of the shift in the U.S. government, the September 11 Attacks and the naval clash in the Yellow Sea in June, South-North Korea relations came to a stalemate.

Nevertheless, with North Korea's statement of apology, inter-Korean talks and exchanges have resumed and North Korea has promised to participate in the Busan Asian Games.

In particular, I have no doubt in my mind that North Korea's participation in the Busan Asian Games will represent another milestone in terms of the Korea peninsula's peace and reconciliation since the 2000 inter-Korean summit talks.

In its recent moves, North Korea has shown signs of opening its economy with private farming system, introduction of commodities- exchange market and actualization of prices.

I ask all the delegates who are here today to continue to the political development of the Korean peninsula by participating in the provision of humanitarian aid and expansion of exchanges and co-operation with North Korea in various fields such as technology and economic co-operation so that North Korea can overcome its economic difficulties to enjoy the peace and prosperity of the Asian region.

*Distinguished delegates!*

Recently many parts of the world including Korea have suffered losses of life and property due to unprecedented heavy rainfall. Such environmental hazards, rather than being considered as natural disasters, are regarded to be a result of serious destruction of environment following rapid industrialization and urbanization.

In addressing the international issue of global environment countries around the world are carrying out active discussions, for instance, by adopting the 1992 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change at the UN Conference on Environment and Development.

However, in reality there are opposing positions over the environmental protection between advanced countries and developing countries, as well as the order of priority of development. For Asian countries which are most developing countries, it is crucial to combat poverty and develop ways to enhance the quality of life.

At the same time, the protection and management of nature—the very foundation of our survival—is also a vital objective. In that regard, we must all contribute to realizing co-existence and co-prosperity in line with the international consensus on sustainable development.

*Honourable Chairman, distinguished delegates,*

Korea, together with Japan, backed by the support of all the Asian countries, successfully hosted the first World Cup Games of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The upcoming 14<sup>th</sup> Busan Asian Games which is to commence on September 29, will not only be a venue for exchange of sports but also will be a cultural festival where the traditional cultures of all Asian countries will come together, with the participation of athletes from all parts of Asia including the 300 North Korean players and sports fans.

I would like to ask all the participants here today to provide the same strong support and keen interest in the Asian Games as you had in the World Cup Games.

Thank you.



# ASEAN Inter - Parliamentary Organization

The 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly

8-13 September 2002, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

23GA/2002/Statement/Nz

RECHARD WORTH OBE

MP FOR EPSOM

Representing Epsom, Mt Eden, Newmarket, Parnell and Remuera

TWEENTY-THIRD AIPO GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HA N01; 8-13 SEPTEMBER 2002

STATEMENT BY THE NEW ZEALAND OBSERVER

MR. RECHARD WORTH OBE, MP

*Your Excellency Mr Nguyen Van An, President of AIPO*

*Distinguished delegates*

I am delighted to be here in Ha Noi for the 23rd ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Organisation General Assembly and to have the opportunity of making a statement on behalf of New Zealand. Now I know why this city is described by so many people as one of the most beautiful in Asia. New Zealand has a long-standing relationship with ASEAN. Back in 1975, when the organisation was only eight years old, New Zealand became a dialogue partner of ASEAN. This means that we have a special relationship with ASEAN and attend, at Foreign

Minister level, the annual ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference (PMC). New Zealand regards the PMC as an important opportunity to hold a range of discussions with ASEAN counterparts. Our objectives in participating in the ASEAN PMC, and in other ASEAN bodies such as AIPO, can be summarised as follows:

- we want to contribute to the evolution of a regional consensus on political and economic developments;
- our participation underlines our credentials as a committed and responsible member of the Asia/Pacific community of nations;
- we can reinforce our bilateral relations with the member states of ASEAN;
- we gain an opportunity to exchange views with other dialogue partners who have major influence in the Asian region.

ASEAN provides an important entree for New Zealand into multilateral diplomacy. The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) was established in 1994 as a mechanism to enable countries of the Asia Pacific region to get together once a year to discuss issues of regional security. New Zealand is a full participant in the ARF, indeed we will be hosting a working level meeting in Wellington in November this year. Although the Forum does not yet provide a mechanism for resolving conflicts, it provides a useful venue for regional leaders to discuss security concerns and to design and implement confidence building measures. The ARF has risen to the challenge of providing a regional response to the terrorism attacks of 11 September. It also offers another way of engaging North Korea with the international community.

On the economic side we are very committed to the evolving relationship between ASEAN's trading group, known as AFTA, and the free trade agreement between Australia and New Zealand, known as CER - or Closer Economic Relations. We are encouraged by the progress that has been made in the AFTA/CER Closer Economic Partnership process over the last year. Later this week in Brunei AFTA/CER Economic Ministers will sign a Declaration, which will lay the foundation for enhanced AFTA/CER trade and economic co-operation.

New Zealand's own trading relationship with ASEAN countries is flourishing. In 2001, our exports to ASEAN increased by 21 percent from the previous year. ASEAN now takes 8.6 percent of our total exports and five of its members are on the list of our top twenty export destinations - the biggest is Malaysia, followed by the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Viet Nam and Singapore. Trade in the other direction is healthy too, as New Zealand prides itself on having a very open market. So in the same period, our imports from ASEAN increased by 24 percent, and now amount to more than NZ\$1.5 billion dollars.

An interesting aspect of New Zealand's trade with ASEAN is that we are importing more and more manufactured items - cars from Thailand, computers from Malaysia - while we continue to export to ASEAN mainly agricultural, forestry or fish products. This trend underlines the complementary nature of our economic relationship and our sectors of comparative advantage. I would like to cite a specific trading example to illustrate my point. One of New Zealand's largest exporters of forest products; provides high tech cardboard packaging board to banana growers in Davao, southern Philippines. The packaging enables the growers to ensure quality control so that the product can be shipped to third country markets, arriving at their destinations in first grade condition. There is scope for exporters in CER countries to help realise the enormous export potential of horticultural industries in ASEAN countries

I would also note the healthy level of investment by New Zealand in ASEAN and by ASEAN countries in New Zealand. Similarly, tourist numbers are growing strongly. Ha Noi and Angkor Wat are amongst the trendiest tourist destinations for New Zealanders. Last year almost 100,000 tourists from ASEAN countries visited New Zealand. We have significant numbers of tertiary students from ASEAN at our universities, especially from Thailand and Malaysia. A growing number of immigrants from ASEAN countries are also making an important contribution to NZ's national life. It is the vigour of these people-to-people linkages that gives us confidence in the long-term future of the relationship. Let me say a few words now about the development assistance, which New Zealand provides in the ASEAN context. Ever since New Zealand became a dialogue partner in 1975, it has provided funding for multi-country projects as part of the ASEAN/New Zealand dialogue relationship. The allocation for the programme at present is NZ\$1.8 million annually. This is in addition to the bilateral programmes we have with a number of ASEAN countries. Our programme focuses on:

- trade related activities designed to enhance the capability of the countries cornered to trade effectively and in the process to contribute to poverty reduction;
- science and technology co-operation;
- English language training for officials from the newer ASEAN members
- Social development initiatives.

ASEAN's adoption in 1998 of the Ha Noi Plan of Action, in response to the Asian economic crisis, has provided a useful framework for the ASEAN-New Zealand regional co-operation Official Development Assistance programme, ASEAN leaders launched an Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) in 2000 which sharpened the focus of collective efforts in ASEAN to narrow the development gap within ASEAN, as well as between ASEAN and rest of the world. New Zealand is pleased to be participating in that process.

Finally, let me express my gratitude to the organisers of this General Assembly for the invitation to attend, and for the opportunity to speak to you. Contacts like this, among the parliamentarians of the region, and with representatives from the parliaments of ASEAN dialogue countries, contribute to strengthening the good will, peace and stability, which were the goals of ASEAN's founders back in 1967. We value ASEAN countries perspectives on international and regional issues. We hope that New Zealand is seen as a friend and a partner in the region. That is what we set out to be.

Thank you.





# ASEAN Inter - Parliamentary Organization

The 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly

8-13 September 2002, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

23GA/2002/Statement/Ru

SPEECH OF THE HEAD OF RUSSIAN DELEGATION

MR. ARTUR N. CHILINGAROV

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF THE STATE DUMA

*Esteemed Mr. Nguyen Van An, President of the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam!*

*Distinguished delegates!*

*Ladies and gentlemen!*

On behalf of the Russian Delegation I would like to express our deepest appreciation for the warm hospitality by the Vietnam National Assembly and the fine arrangements made by Vietnam for this General Assembly of AIPO.

It is well known that the current Assembly is in the limelight of public opinion not only in the context of regional problems but also of global ones. The times when ASEAN and correspondingly AIPO were considered as pure regional organizations of developing countries have gone forever.

Since then the situation has changed greatly and changed for the better. The ASEAN nations have shown to the world bright opportunities of dynamic economic development. AIPO itself serves a perfect example of how coordinated actions of national parliamentarians may become

an effective instrument to strengthen ASEAN's commitment to cooperation among the peoples of the region, peace and stability in the region and in the world as a whole.

For Russia this region is of highest international priority. It is determined by unique geopolitical position of our country: the two thirds of its territory are located in Asia. Naturally Russia considers itself as a part of the region. We are interconnected not only by common historic destiny but as well as by common interests – in sphere of security, economy and social development.

All processes that are taking place here have direct impact on Russian interests. First of all I mean security and stability of our Far East territories where we want to have the most favorable conditions for economic development of these huge and rich districts of Siberia and Far East. We are interested in general improvement of political situation in the region, in maintaining a stable and predictable situation – in military, political and economic dimensions.

During his recent trip over Russian Far East President Vladimir PUTIN paid great attention to future economic development of this region including possible participation of foreign investors. Fishing industry, energetic and transport were mentioned as priorities. I think that other states may be satisfied by the fact that the Russian leader spoke about the necessity of interconnection between intensive economic growth and measures to protect environment. He proposed to work out multilateral treaty with participation of all neighbor countries of the region.

It is understood that in our times of globalization the regional processes should be taken into account in interconnection with the globe as a whole. It becomes of special importance in the context of combating international terrorism. Russia with full determination supported the world community's efforts in fighting this global evil. The UN and its Security Council are the main coordinators of these actions. Russia has made important contribution into creation and strengthening the anti terrorist coalition after the 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001. We are doing our best at the Russian Parliament to speed up the process of working out and agreeing on two particular drafts – a comprehensive antiterrorist convention (Indian draft) and International convention on combating nuclear terrorism (Russian initiative) as well as working out universally recognized definition of “terrorism”. In our opinion prevention of terrorist acts is of special importance when nuclear materials, chemical and biological substances are used.

Practically all states of this region have declared their determination to combat any acts of international terrorism and extremism, and it is a good basis for widening of regional cooperation not only in combating terrorism but in maintaining peace, security and stability in the region. With this background we pay more attention to multilateral mechanisms of regional cooperation. In particular, cooperation in the framework “ASEAN + 3” is getting more and more effective.

We consider the results of the Brunei regional conference of ASEAN as favorable. Russia is actively participating in preparation of so called “Pacific consensus” – something like code of behavior in the South China Sea. It is very important for parliamentarians to use what we have already got, especially the traditions of our cooperation.

We are sure that combination of existing structures of multiparty and bilateral cooperation can serve us to maintain the regional stability and security. It is the way to multi pole regional

security system based on equal and mutually beneficially cooperation of all states of the region. Russia on its part is ready to contribute to success of this process.

As you know the world summit on sustainable development took place in Johannesburg. Leaders from more than 100 countries too part in it. I regret to say that among them there were not many parliamentarians. I was a deputy head of Russian delegation at the summit and understood that quite a lot of urgent topical problems could be resolved only with the participation of national parliaments. I mean poverty, drugs, the gap between the rich and the poor, environment, unemployment, medical treatment. All these problems exist in this region. I remember that at the Summit heads of national delegations of Australia, Canada, the People's Republic of China, European Parliament, Japan, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand and Russia - all of them are AIPO observer countries spoke about their readiness assist in overcoming these problems. Russia on its part declared about its reconsideration of the debt of Asian and African developing countries to our country as well as about its support for Kyoto' protocol. Our Parliament will start procedures for ratifying it.

We are convinced that the current General Assembly of AIPO serves for prosperity, stability and security to prevail in the ASEAN region.

We believe that AIPO will continue to play a constructive role in keeping ASEAN dynamic, progressive and relevant.

Together we are able to make our world a bit happier for the future generations.

