



ASEAN Inter - Parliamentary Organization

The 23rd General Assembly

8-13 September 2002, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

23/GA/2002/PolRep/01

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON POLITICAL MATTERS

Honorable Chairman,

I have the honour of submitting the following report on the Meeting of the Committee on Political Matters.

1. The Committee met on 10 September 2002 at 8h30 hrs.
2. The meeting was chaired and attended by:

Hon. Ton Nu Thi Ninh (Mrs.) - Chairman

Hon. Do Ngoc Quang - Rapporteur

Cambodia

1. Hon. Monh Saphan
2. Hon. Un Ning
3. Hon. Monh Siyon

Indonesia

1. H.E. Akbar Tandjung
2. H.E. Soetardjo Soerjogoeritno
3. Hon. Dr. Burhan Djabir Magonda
4. Hon. Sabam Sirait

5. Hon. Franklin William Kayhatu

Lao PDR

1. Hon. Xayxomphone PHOMVIHANE
2. Hon. Viseth SVENGSUKSA
3. Hon. Thayaphone SINGTHONG

Malaysia

1. Hon. Ruhanie bin Ahmad, Datuk
2. Hon. Joseph Salang Anak Gandum

The Philippines

1. Hon. Aurelio M. Umali

Singapore

1. Hon. Chiam See Tong
2. Hon. Dr. Amy Khor Lean Suan
3. Hon. Dr. Wang Kai Yuen

Thailand

1. Hon. Wittaya MASAYNA
2. Hon. Lt. Col. Thitiya RANGSITPOL
3. Hon. Pimuk SIMAROJ

Vietnam

1. Hon. Vu Xuan Hong
2. Hon. Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Dao
3. Hon. Phan Trung Ly
4. Hon. Tran Quoc Thuan

Brunei Darussalam

1. Mr. Kamsani Noordin

Myanmar

1. H.E. U Aung Toe

2. H.E. U Tun Myint

3. The Meeting was held in the traditional ASEAN spirit of friendship, frankness and understanding. The topics discussed included:

Enhancing Regional Integration through increasing Co-operation between the Regional Inter-Parliamentary and Inter-Governmental Institutions;

- a) The delegates recalled the main target proclaimed in the Charter of AIPO, i.e. to support the governments in achieving the goals envisaged in the 1967 Bangkok Declaration and noted with satisfaction the contributions made by AIPO to the building of ASEAN into an association of peace, stability and equitable development. The delegates agreed that closer co-ordination between AIPO and ASEAN is of great significance to regional integration.
- b) In view of fast-changing developments in the regional and international situation, the delegates expressed concern over the absence of a co-ordination mechanism between AIPO and ASEAN, which somewhat hampered ASEAN efforts in its integration. The delegates stressed the need for establishing such a mechanism and agreed to explore further areas for co-ordination and co-operation between AIPO and ASEAN. These include the holding of regular consultations between AIPO Chair and Chairman of ASEAN Standing Committee to co-ordinate on common policies and actions, particularly in the expedition of prioritised programs, exchange of observers to AIPO and ASEAN Meetings and preparation of AIPO's message to the Heads of State/ Government at their annual Summit Meeting.
- c) The delegates emphasised the importance of establishing a co-operation mechanism between ASEAN Secretariat and AIPO Standing Secretariat in Jakarta through signing a MOU or other forms acceptable to both sides with a view to enhancing co-operation between the two Secretariats in such areas as information and experience sharing, technical assistance and personnel exchange. In this connection, the delegates welcomed the attendance of ASEAN Deputy Secretary-General to the 23rd Assembly. The delegates also called for an increase in regional law-makers' visits to ASEAN Secretariat as well as more frequent and active participation of the ASEAN Secretariat in AIPO activities.. The delegates also agreed on the need to enhance the efficacy and effectiveness of AIPO Standing Secretariat to adequately meet the ensuing requirements.

Present-day world peace and the UN Charter's role in maintaining world peace and international justice

- d) The delegates re-affirmed the importance of the United Nations Charter as the foundation for conduct governing inter-state relations . Regarding the situation in Iraq, the delegates reiterated their opposition to any unilateral unjustified military actions against the state of Iraq. Some delegates expressed their grave concern over the intention of the US and its allies to take such actions on Iraq. The delegates emphasized the urgent need for a peaceful solution to the matter and called upon the UN to continue to be engaged with the issue with a view to achieving durable peace in the region. The delegates also urged the international community to seriously address the humanitarian dimension of suffering and tragedies emanating from the prolonged sanctions on Iraq and the UN to review the decision on the justification for ongoing sanctions on Iraq. The delegates called for dialogue between Iraq and the UN towards reaching a comprehensive settlement to the issue.

Intensification of Co-operation of ASEAN + 3

- e) The delegates noted with satisfaction the significant progress made in the ASEAN + 3 co-operation in a broad range of areas such as economy, finance and banking, tourism, energy, agriculture and environment etc. The delegates particularly welcomed the assistance accorded to the newer ASEAN Member Countries and narrowing the development gap in ASEAN through ASEAN+3 co-operation activities.
- f) The delegates stressed the need of encouraging their governments and private sectors in the region to actively take part in ASEAN+3 co-operation. The delegates also agreed to sustain efforts to co-ordinate policies to speed up regional integration and linkage, promote people-to-people exchange, including exchange among parliamentarians with a view to deepening mutual understanding and trust, thus creating a conducive environment for furthering the ASEAN+3 co-operation.

Report on 35th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMM-35) and Related Meetings (Brunei, 29 July - 1 August 2002)

- g) The delegates took note with appreciation of the Report on the AMM-35 and other related Meetings held on 29 July - 1 August 2002 submitted by Brunei delegation. The Meeting welcomed the Foreign Ministers' resolve to furthering efforts in strengthening unity and cohesiveness, accelerating regional integration, narrowing the development gap and expanding ASEAN's external relations, particularly with ASEAN's Dialogue Partners and re-affirmed their support in this regard.

Regional Security

- h) The delegates had in-depth and extensive discussion on the political and security situation in the region and the world, particularly on the major developments that affect the regional security environment and agreed that on the whole peace and co-operation for development still remained the prevailing trend. The delegates also recognised the lingering threats posed by the transnational non-traditional security issues, which have become destabilizing factors to peace and prosperity in the region.
- i) Touching upon the issue of counter-terrorism, the delegates reiterated ASEAN's commitment collectively and individually to countering terrorist acts in all forms and manifestations and to supporting the respective governments in joining efforts to eliminate terrorism from the life of mankind.
- j) The delegates emphasised that combating terrorism should be done in an effective and comprehensive manner and that solutions to the terrorism issues must be linked to the efforts to address poverty, inequality, discrimination; terrorism should not be linked with religion, race, culture or nationality.
- k) The delegates also emphasised that measures taken to combat terrorism must comply with the United Nations Charter and respect the fundamental principles of international law and sovereignty of States with a view to maintaining peace and security for every State, region and the world.
- l) Concerning the situation in the South China Sea, the delegates welcomed major efforts by ASEAN and China in developing the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea and agreed that the conclusion of the Code of Conduct would represent a significant contribution to confidence building in the region. In this regard the delegates welcomed ASEAN determination to work towards a Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, considering it as an important and encouraging step toward the eventual conclusion of the Code of Conduct.
- m) The delegates expressed concern over the increase in piracy in the region and called for closer co-operation among the countries concerned in monitoring, preventing and countering piracy, with focus on practical areas such as sharing of information, training, capacity building. The delegates agreed that the combat against piracy should be conducted on the basis of respect for sovereignty and jurisdiction of one another as well as international law, particularly the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

ASEAN Co-operation to Combat Transnational Crime

- n) The delegates recognized the serious threat posed by transnational crime to peace, security and stability as well as the economic well-being of the regional and

international communities. The delegates reiterated the need for ASEAN Member Countries to further strengthen cooperation in combating transnational crime and welcomed the initiatives and programs of cooperation prepared by ASEAN Member Countries to this effect. The delegates urged their governments to re-double their efforts in combating transnational crime through carrying out the Work Programme for the implementation of ASEAN Plan of Action to Combat Transnational Crime.

Draft Resolutions

4. Three draft resolutions were submitted by Vietnam, one by Malaysia, one by the Philippines, one by Indonesia and one report by Brunei Darusaalam. After extensive exchange of views on the substance of the issues as contained in the draft resolutions as well as their appropriateness, the delegates decided to submit 5 draft resolutions for adoption and a report to be decided upon at the General Assembly, as follows:
- Draft Resolution on the Strengthening of Regional Integration through Increasing Co-ordination and Co-operation between Inter-Parliamentary and Inter-Governmental Mechanisms in the Region
 - Draft Resolution on the Importance of United Nations Charter in the Maintenance of World Peace: Situation in Iraq
 - Draft Resolution on Expansion and Deepening of ASEAN + 3 Co-operation
 - Draft Resolution on Peace and Security in the Region
 - Draft Resolution on ASEAN Cooperation to Combat Transnational Crimes
 - Decision on Report on the 35th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting and other related Meetings held on 29 July - 1 August 2002 in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam.

Hon. TON NU THI NINH

Hon. DO NGOC QUANG

Chairwoman

Rapporteur