

**STATEMENT BY MR CHAN YENG KIT, PERMANENT SECRETARY FOR
INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS & THE ARTS, SINGAPORE
AT THE 10TH CONFERENCE OF ASEAN MINISTERS
RESPONSIBLE FOR INFORMATION (AMRI),
VIENTIANE, LAOS, 5 NOV 09**

*Mr Chairman, His Excellency Mounkeo Oraboun, Minister for Information and
Culture, Lao People's Democratic Republic*

Honourable ASEAN Ministers

Excellencies

Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen

1. Let me begin by thanking the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic for hosting the 10th AMRI and the warm hospitality accorded to me and my delegation. I would also like to express my condolences to the families affected by the floods caused by typhoon Ketsana.

A Connected ASEAN

2. At the recently concluded 15th ASEAN Summit, ASEAN Leaders recognised that enhancing intra-regional connectivity would benefit all ASEAN Member States and their people, and help us move closer to our goal of building an ASEAN Community by 2015.

3. Media plays an important role in achieving this goal. It provides people with the latest information and connects them to happenings both at home and around

the world. As such, we should leverage media to connect the peoples in our region, promote mutual understanding, and forge a common ASEAN identity.

ASEAN Collaboration

4. The theme for the 10th AMRI — “Enhancing Media Cooperation in ASEAN Community Building” — underscores the importance of media cooperation in building the ASEAN Community. We have already made significant progress to date. Through the ASEAN COCI, which was set up to encourage cooperation in culture and information, we have developed several projects to promote ASEAN. They include ASEAN TV News, ASEAN In Action, and ASEAN Snapshots, to name a few.

Singapore-led ASEAN Projects

5. Besides participating in ASEAN projects endorsed by the COCI, Singapore has also initiated several projects. One of them is the ASEAN Newsmaker project. This project aims to raise ASEAN awareness among youths and encourage the exchange of information in an interesting and educational way. Participants are trained on how to produce video news using the NewsMaker software, and other video editing techniques. To date, 235 teachers and students from Brunei, Cambodia, Malaysia, Myanmar and Singapore have participated in the project, producing a total of 67 videos. These videos have been uploaded onto the ASEAN Media Portal website. We hope to complete this project for the rest of the ASEAN Members by the end of this year.

6. Another project is the ASEAN Computer Game, a single-player PC-based game that takes the player on a mission through 10 ASEAN Member States. The game aims to foster a sense of regional identity and inculcate knowledge of our ASEAN neighbours in an entertaining way. The Prologue (which covers Jakarta), Viet Nam and Singapore episodes are ready and the remaining episodes will be completed by mid-January 2010. Singapore will work with other Member States to promote the game in schools in the region.

The New Media Landscape

7. Ladies and Gentlemen, acknowledging that Media plays an important role in ASEAN community building and connectivity is not sufficient. ASEAN member countries should work together to harness technological advancements and respond to the dynamic media sector. In response to the evolving Media landscape, Singapore has launched the Singapore Media Fusion Plan (SMFP). It prepares Singapore companies to respond to new opportunities in creating New Asia Media content, services and applications that resonate with audiences worldwide.

8. Asia's media sector has vast potential. According to Price Waterhouse Coppers, the media markets of Indonesia, Vietnam, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand are likely to continue their double-digit or near double-digit growth. Digital media is the new catalyst of growth in these media markets, with performance increasingly driven by companies that provide products and services for the Internet, TV distribution and video games.

9. Seeing how digital media is an emerging driver of growth in many ASEAN countries, it is important that AMRI leverages what it has to offer and use it to build a more connected ASEAN.

10. I am happy to note that we have made inroads in the area of digital broadcasting through the ASEAN Digital Broadcasting (ADB) Initiative. The ADB Initiative has recommended several key policies to realise ASEAN's digital vision. One of their most recent recommendations is for ASEAN to adopt a phased approach for Analogue Switch-off from 2015 to 2020. I hope we can endorse this as we work towards a connected community. I would also like to take this opportunity to propose that ASEAN member countries co-produce digital content and promote content exchanges to meet the increasing demand for digital content.

11. Besides digital broadcasting, ASEAN should tap on the opportunities interactive digital media has to offer. One potential initiative which could ride on the interactive digital media platform is the creation of ASEAN Virtual Cities. ASEAN Member countries could upload content such as local street directories and tourist information, which people could then explore virtually. This would generate interest and help more people in ASEAN learn about each ASEAN country interactively.

Conclusion

12. Honorable Ministers and Heads of Delegations, building an ASEAN Community that is truly people-oriented by 2015 requires a long-term commitment and the cooperation of all ASEAN member countries. As we forge ahead, let us be

on the constant lookout for opportunities to work together. I look forward to a fruitful discussion and I wish the Meeting every success.

Thank you.
