

**THE TENTH CONFERENCE OF THE ASEAN MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE  
FOR INFORMATION (AMRI)**

**5<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2009, VIENTIANE**

**ENHANCING MEDIA COOPERATION IN THE PROCESS OF THE ASEAN  
COMMUNITY BUILDING**

**Presentation by Brunei Darussalam**

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Bismillahirrahmanirrahim

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh

And a very good afternoon.

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

*Honourable Ministers, His Excellency ASEAN Secretary-General,  
Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

First of all, I would like to congratulate Your Excellency Mr. Mounkeo Oraboun, Minister of Information and Culture of Lao People's Democratic Republic on your election as the Chair of this meeting. I would also like to thank the Government of Lao People's Democratic Republic and its people for their warm and kind welcome. I am honoured by the gracious hospitality accorded to me and my delegation.

Your Excellency, it gives me great pleasure to be able to attend this significant event, meeting fellow ministers responsible for information from ASEAN and I look forward to a successful meeting.

*Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

As we move to establish a people-centred ASEAN Community and enhancing connectivity for an ASEAN Community, media cooperation plays an important role in linking our societies. Enhancing Media Cooperation should bring people closer together and help to realise the integration of ASEAN as a great and peaceful

community. Media will facilitate the promotion of ASEAN within our people, to the region and to the outside world.

Media is an important channel to reach out to our people and has an essential force in promoting the cooperation, as well as a bridge to forge understanding and enhance exchanges between our people. The media have an important role to play in heightening awareness on issues and information concerning ASEAN. The media can pave ways for ASEAN Member States to work together as one regional community providing solutions. Media can help in ensuring that the people of ASEAN are well informed about latest developments in all sectors of cooperation leading towards greater partnership.

Media coverage of ASEAN has been an effective instrument for distributing the messages of ASEAN. The frequent activities and developments in ASEAN have given the organisation a higher profile with the help of media coverage.

*Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

The ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information (ASEAN-COCI) has implemented and continuously developed communication programmes to further enhance media cooperation. Over the years, member countries at the national and regional levels have successfully organised activities and programmes that have drawn media practitioners, officials, academia and the civil society together. These programmes promote effective cooperation in the fields of culture and information for the purpose of enhancing mutual understanding and solidarity among the peoples of ASEAN. From the activities, we are happy to witness the inter-agency cooperation between ASEAN Member States. The programmes and activities have no doubt strengthened cooperation on information sharing and contribute towards a sustained information mechanism in ASEAN.

ASEAN has a large pool of information mechanism and resources to promote itself. Under ASEAN COCI the list of information and media cooperation has been growing creating opportunities to better the process of ASEAN Community building. The platforms such as ASEAN Television News (ATN) Exchange, ASEAN Digital

Broadcasting (ADB) cooperation, ASEAN in Action (AiA) and many more are very important projects that help to increase awareness, enhance connectivity and deepen understanding between peoples of ASEAN.

Since its inception, the ASEAN Television News project has enabled ASEAN Member States to exchange news of ASEAN. Such initiative promotes understanding and creates awareness about ASEAN within and outside the region, reaching as far as Asia-Pacific, Europe and American networks (via Asia Pacific news organisation - Asia vision and Eurovision). The programme portrays ASEAN as a dynamic, culturally rich and diverse but harmonious, stable and cohesive region that is conducive for the inflow of Foreign Direct Investment and tourism.

Enhancing cooperation through ASEAN Television News Exchange can further create stronger showcase of ASEAN identity and stronger platform for building ASEAN Community. Successful story of an entrepreneur from one corner of ASEAN can inspire the peoples of ASEAN to generate vibrant economic activities in our region. News of community activities in ASEAN will deepen understanding among our people about ASEAN culture and life.

ASEAN Digital Broadcasting (ADB) is another initiative that promotes cooperation in the new broadcasting technology. In the Ninth Conference of AMRI held in Jakarta in 2007, ASEAN adopted DVB-T as the ASEAN Digital TV standard for digital terrestrial broadcasting. The success of ADB will further enhance the competitiveness of ASEAN in Broadcasting and new media. Digital Broadcasting - the new wave of broadcasting technology will provide better and enhanced communication platform to push information and cultural content. With digital broadcasting, ASEAN can further enhance cooperation in production of contents between broadcasting organisations and media houses within ASEAN, thus, contributing to improving links between nations and creating opportunities for our people and the industry.

The ASEAN in Action programme is another initiative in which the ASEAN National Network has produced and broadcasted at least 52 radio programmes per year about ASEAN on a weekly basis. Brunei Darussalam through Radio Television Brunei has actively produced the programme since its inception 1994. Radio can

have wide coverage and there is plenty of potential for this mechanism, to reach as far as the 500 over million population of ASEAN. This program can also be streamed via Internet radio.

Exchange of media content among ASEAN Member States is also an essential part in linking our societies in our effort to build ASEAN Community. In Brunei Darussalam, Radio Television Brunei screen dramas, movies, news and documentaries acquired from ASEAN Member States. These have helped promote understanding of ASEAN among our population.

*Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Linkages with the national news and information networks of member countries need to be maintained, strengthened and to go beyond radio, television and newspapers. The emergence of digital technology and the Internet has changed the conventional way of sending and receiving information by both media operators and consumers. More communication material can be produced with the use of New Media. The increasing use of New Media by the younger generation has created big potential and low cost medium which can be used to provide information. Given the popularity of various New Media platform, particularly among young generation, ASEAN can make more use of these to outreach the target audiences and general public especially the young - the generation that is going to continue building the future ASEAN.

There are also more people owning mobile phones than those having access to internet in the region. Brunei has recently joined force with telecommunication companies to organise Indonesia Earthquake & the Philippines Typhoon Humanitarian Fund via Short Messaging Service or SMS. ASEAN may consider collaborating with telecommunication companies to share information about ASEAN, via SMS and MMS.

*Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Enhancing media cooperation will also promote ASEAN brand within and beyond the region that is rich in diversity but collectively harmonious promoting growth, peace and prosperity. Enhancing media cooperation among ASEAN member states will provide infrastructure in forming critical network for better information and cultural dissemination and exchanges in realising ASEAN community building.

We need to expedite the implementation of the expanded consultative platform and emphasise the need to promote a more inclusive and broader all sector representation and participation to realise ASEAN vision of integration.

Brunei Darussalam believes that media cooperation plays a very important role in forming a better integrated community of ASEAN. As ASEAN advance to establish people-centered ASEAN Community by 2015, the role of our media is more critical than ever. Commitment to building an ASEAN community is to ensure its people are better-informed. Enhancing media cooperation can broaden the awareness of ASEAN and strengthen ASEAN Identity. Let us join hands together to work for a harmonious and prosperous home.

*Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

With that, I thank you for your kind attention.

Pehin Dato Haji Mohammad Haji Daud  
Minister of Energy at the Prime Minister's Office  
Brunei Darussalam