

2nd Edition

AICHR

ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights

What You Need to Know



One Vision
One Identity
One Community



AICHR

ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights

What You Need to Know

(2nd Edition)

The ASEAN Secretariat
Jakarta

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

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INTRODUCTION

For over four decades since its establishment, ASEAN as an intergovernmental organisation has always endeavoured towards improving the lives of the peoples in the region, particularly in the economic, political security and socio-cultural aspects. To further ensure the wellbeing of the ASEAN people, ASEAN decided to have its own regional human rights body, which reflects ASEAN's strong commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Human rights are an integral part of the ASEAN Community and are reflected in both the ASEAN Charter (Article 1.7, 2.2.i, and 14), and the ASEAN Political-Security Blueprint (section A.1.5). The ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) and the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) were established in 2009 and 2010 respectively. The establishment of the AICHR presents to the region and the global community ASEAN's strong commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The AICHR will set the tone for cooperation in human rights promotion and protection in ASEAN. The AICHR is the overarching body with a cross-cutting mandate that handles matters related to human rights cooperation with other ASEAN Bodies, external partners and stakeholders.

Yet how many people within the ASEAN region know of the AICHR's existence? And how many are aware of how the AICHR came about and what mandate it holds? This booklet is intended to provide quick facts regarding the AICHR and the development of human rights in the ASEAN region.

ASEAN

ASEAN was established on 8 August 1967, through the signing of the Bangkok Declaration (ASEAN Declaration) by the five founding members of ASEAN: Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. Additional membership of five countries—Brunei Darussalam (1984), Viet Nam (1995), Lao PDR and Myanmar (1997), and, Cambodia (1999)—has raised the number of ASEAN Member States to ten.

The purposes of ASEAN, as stated in the ASEAN Charter, includes among others:

- To maintain and enhance peace, security and stability and further strengthen peace-oriented values in the region;
- To enhance regional resilience by promoting greater political, security, economic and socio-cultural cooperation;
- To ensure that the peoples and Member States of ASEAN live in peace with the world at large in a just, democratic and harmonious environment;
- To alleviate poverty and narrow the development gap within ASEAN through mutual assistance and cooperation;

- To strengthen democracy, enhance good governance and the rule of law, and to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, with due regards to the rights and responsibilities of the Member States of ASEAN;
- To develop human resources through closer cooperation in education and life-long learning, and in science and technology, for the empowerment of the peoples of ASEAN and for the strengthening of the ASEAN Community;
- To enhance the well-being and livelihood of the peoples of ASEAN by providing them with equitable access to opportunities for human development, social welfare and justice;
- To promote a people-oriented ASEAN in which all sectors of society are encouraged to participate in, and benefit from, the process of ASEAN integration and community building;
- To promote an ASEAN identity through the fostering of greater awareness of the diverse culture and heritage of the region;

The ASEAN Charter's entry into force in 2008 provides the legal status and the institutional framework for ASEAN. Codifying ASEAN norms, rules and values, the Charter also ensures accountability and compliance and sets clear targets for ASEAN.

ASEAN has committed itself to establish an ASEAN Community by 2015, and has adopted a Roadmap towards the ASEAN Community 2015. This Community will be supported by the three Community Pillars, along with their respective Blueprints: the ASEAN Political-Security

Community (APSC) Blueprint, the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprint, and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Blueprint. Each Community has its own Community Council which coordinates the work of the different sectors under the Community Pillars.



The ASEAN Summit, which is composed of the ASEAN Heads of State/Government, is the highest policy-making body in ASEAN. They meet twice every year at the ASEAN Summit Meetings. The ASEAN Leaders are supported by their respective Foreign Ministers who meet as the ASEAN Coordinating Council (ACC) and in the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting (AMM). Further into the structure of ASEAN, the ASEAN Member States appoint representatives to ASEAN

with the rank of Ambassadors, who sit as members of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR). The CPR is tasked to coordinate with the ASEAN National Secretariats, the ASEAN Sectoral Ministerial Bodies, and facilitate ASEAN's cooperation with external partners.

Supporting all the work and efforts undertaken by ASEAN is the ASEAN Secretariat. The ASEAN Secretariat is headed by the Secretary-General of ASEAN (who is accorded the same level as a Minister) and is assisted by four Deputy Secretaries-General, one for each of the ASEAN Communities and one for the Community and Corporate Affairs of ASEAN.

HUMAN RIGHTS ON THE ASEAN AGENDA

In 1993, the United Nations convened the *World Conference on Human Rights* in Vienna, Austria. The Member Countries of ASEAN, back then only consisting of six members, all participated at the World Conference. The Conference resulted in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action.

Subsequently, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers in their Joint Communiqué of the 26th AMM (July 1993) stated the following:

16. *The Foreign Ministers welcomed the international consensus achieved during the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, 14-25 June 1993, and reaffirmed ASEAN's commitment to and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms as set out in the Vienna Declaration of 25 June 1993. They stressed that human rights are interrelated and indivisible comprising civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. These rights*

are of equal importance. They should be addressed in a balanced and integrated manner and protected and promoted with due regard for specific cultural, social, economic and political circumstances. They emphasized that the promotion and protection of human rights should not be politicized.

17. *The Foreign Ministers agreed that ASEAN should coordinate a common approach on human rights and actively participate and contribute to the application, promotion and protection of human rights. They noted that the UN Charter had placed the question of universal observance and promotion of human rights within the context of international cooperation. They stressed that development is an inalienable right and that the use of human rights as a conditionality for economic cooperation and development assistance is detrimental to international cooperation and could undermine an international consensus on human rights. They emphasized that the protection and promotion of human rights in the international community should take cognizance of the principles of respect for national sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of states. They were convinced that freedom, progress and national stability are promoted by a balance between the rights of the individual and those of the community, through which many individual rights are realized, as provided for in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.*

18. *The Foreign Ministers reviewed with satisfaction the considerable and continuing progress of ASEAN in freeing its peoples from fear and want, enabling them to live in*

dignity. They stressed that the violations of basic human rights must be redressed and should not be tolerated under any pretext. They further stressed the importance of strengthening international cooperation on all aspects of human rights and that all governments should uphold humane standards and respect human dignity. In this regard and in support of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action of 25 June 1993, they agreed that ASEAN should also consider the establishment of an appropriate regional mechanism on human rights. For the first time, ASEAN set itself towards the development of regional human rights regime.

The Second ASEAN Informal Summit, held in Kuala Lumpur on 15 December 1997, adopted the ASEAN Vision 2020 which sets out a broad vision for ASEAN in the year 2020: *an ASEAN as a concert of Southeast Asian Nations, outward looking, living in peace, stability and prosperity, bonded together in partnership in dynamic development and in a community of caring societies.* In order to implement the long-term vision, the Hanoi Plan of Action (HPA) 1997 was drawn up.

Under Section IV, paragraph 4.8 of the HPA, ASEAN commits itself to “*enhance exchange of information in the field of human rights among ASEAN Countries in order to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all peoples in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action.*”

To support the realisation of an ASEAN Vision 2020, the ASEAN Member States drew up the 2004 Vientiane Action

Programme. In the Action Programme, under the sub-section ‘Political Developments’, the Member States agree to “*promote human rights and obligations*”.

Five years later, ASEAN Member States decided to accelerate the establishment of the ASEAN Community by 2015. The Member States adopted the Roadmap for an ASEAN Community 2015 and the three ASEAN Community Blueprints.

Human rights components which were included in the 2004 Vientiane Action Programme are reiterated in the Action Programme under the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) Blueprint, section A.1.5. “Promotion and Protection of Human Rights”, with the following action lines:

ACTIONS:

- i. Establish an **ASEAN human rights body** through the completion of its Terms of Reference (ToR) by 2009 and encourage cooperation between it and existing human rights mechanisms, as well as with other relevant international organisations;
- ii. Complete a stock-take of existing human rights mechanisms and equivalent bodies, including Sectoral Bodies promoting the rights of women and children by 2009;
- iii. Cooperate closely with efforts of the Sectoral Bodies in the development of an ASEAN instrument on the protection and promotion of the rights of migrant workers;
- iv. Strengthen interaction between the network of existing human rights mechanisms as well as other civil society organisations, with relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies;

- v. Enhance/conduct exchange of information in the field of human rights among ASEAN countries in order to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms of peoples in accordance with the ASEAN Charter and the Charter of the United Nations, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action;
- vi. Promote education and public awareness on human rights; and
- vii. Cooperate closely with efforts of the sectoral bodies in the establishment of an ASEAN commission on the promotion and protection of the rights of women and children.

AICHR

Given the fact that human rights have been featured on the agenda of ASEAN since 1993, the establishment of a regional mechanism on human rights seems just a matter of time. Article 14 of the ASEAN Charter states that *“In conformity with the purposes and principles of the ASEAN Charter relating to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, ASEAN shall establish an ASEAN human rights body”*.

The High Level Panel on an ASEAN Human Rights Body drafted the Terms of Reference of AICHR which was adopted by the ASEAN Minister Meeting in July 2009. On 23 October 2009, the ten AICHR Representatives, one from each Member State, were appointed and the AICHR was inaugurated at the 15th ASEAN Summit in Cha-am Hua Hin, Thailand.

In the *Cha-am Hua Hin Declaration on the Inauguration of AICHR*, the ASEAN Leaders stated that the AICHR is part of the intergovernmental cooperation among ten ASEAN Member States to develop regional cooperation on human rights. The establishment of the AICHR demonstrates ASEAN’s commitment to pursue forward-looking strategies to strengthen regional cooperation on human rights. It is designed to be an integral part of ASEAN organisational structure and an overarching institution with overall responsibility for the promotion and protection of human rights in ASEAN.

Decision-making of the AICHR is based on consultation and consensus. The AICHR engages in dialogues and consultation with entities associated with ASEAN, and also consults other



The AICHR with the Committee of Permanent Representatives

national, regional and international institutions and entities concerned with the promotion and protection of human rights.

The AICHR holds two regular meetings in a year and additional meetings if and when necessary. They have produced several foundation documents as a framework and basis for their operationalization such as:

- AICHR Five Year Work Plan 2010-2015 and its indicative budget;
- AICHR Priority Programmes/Activities with its respective annual budget;
- Guidelines on the Operations of the AICHR (also known as the Guidelines of the AICHR);
- Rules of Procedure of the AICHR Fund (also known as the ROP of the AICHR Fund);
- Guidelines on Budget Standardisation;
- Guidelines on the AICHR Website's Editorial Board.

Since its establishment, the AICHR has been putting efforts to institutionalise cooperation with external partners at national, regional and international levels. The dialogues with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, the Fundamental Rights Agency, the European Court of Human Rights, government agencies of Japan as well as other agencies/actors including civil society organisations have paved the way for the AICHR to further cooperate with different stakeholders. The AICHR is developing guidelines on engagement with different stakeholders including civil society organisations.

The AICHR has conducted a study visit to the United States in November 2010 at the invitation of the President of the United States, H.E. Barack Obama. The visit provided the AICHR with a timely opportunity to inform the United States government, relevant United Nations agencies, international organisations and international civil society organisations about the work of the AICHR since its inauguration as well as its proposed programs and activities for the years to come. It allowed for the exchange of views on human rights issues of mutual concern and explores possibilities of future cooperation with the US State Department, the relevant United Nations agencies, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and civil society organisations.

The AICHR also conducted a study visit to Europe in May 2011 at the invitation of the External Relations Directorate General of the European Commission. The AICHR visited three European cities, Brussels, Strasbourg and Vienna, and met with various European institutions dealing in human rights. They met with European External Action Service (EEAS) of the European Union, the European Commission, the relevant divisions of the Council of Europe, the Fundamental Rights

Agency and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), especially those dealing with Freedom of Media, and the OSCE Special Representative and Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Rights. They also met with various European civil society organisations and exchanged information about activities.

The AICHR was invited to Japan for a study visit where they met with several key interlocutors. The AICHR met with Parliamentary Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Vice-Minister for Foreign Policy and Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary/Secretary General of National Security Secretariat. The AICHR met also with human rights experts such as: Dr. Yozo Yokota the President, Center for Human Rights Education and Training and member of the UN Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights; Ms. Yoko Hayashi, lawyer and member of Committee on Discrimination against Women; and Dr. Nisuke Ando, Director of the Kyoto Human Rights Research Institute. The



The AICHR with Mr. Stavros Lambrinidis, EU Special Representative for Human Rights, and Mr. Julian Wilson, Head of Mission of the EU Delegation

AICHR was also able to observe an example of Japan's employment of persons with disabilities at the Isetan Mitsukoshi Soleil.

As of 2014, the AICHR has jointly organised several activities and workshops with various external partners concerned with promotion and protection of human rights such as UN Women, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), European Union (EU) and the Working Group for an ASEAN Human Rights Mechanism.

The AICHR had also met the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Navanethem Pillay, at its 7th Meeting in November 2011 in Bali, Indonesia, and the European Union (EU) Special Representative for Human Rights, Mr. Stavros Lambrinidis, at its 12th Meeting in May 2013 at the ASEAN Secretariat.

MANDATES AND FUNCTIONS OF AICHR

The Terms of Reference (TOR) of AICHR lists out the fourteen (14) mandates of AICHR. Their mandates include:

- i. To develop strategies for the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms to complement the building of the ASEAN Community;
- ii. To develop an ASEAN Human Rights Declaration with a view to establishing a framework for human rights cooperation through various ASEAN Conventions and other instruments dealing with human rights;

- iii. To enhance public awareness of human rights among the peoples of ASEAN through education, research and dissemination of information;
- iv. To promote capacity building for the effective implementation of international human rights treaty obligations undertaken by ASEAN Member States;
- v. To encourage ASEAN Member States to consider acceding to and ratifying international human rights instruments;
- vi. To promote the full implementation of ASEAN instruments related to human rights;
- vii. To provide advisory services and technical assistance on human rights matters to ASEAN Sectoral Bodies upon request;



The AICHR with the ACWC Representatives

- viii. To engage in dialogue and consultation with other ASEAN Bodies and Entities associated with ASEAN, including civil society organisations and other stakeholders, as provided for in Chapter V of the ASEAN Charter;
- ix. To consult, as may be appropriate, with other national, regional and international institutions and entities concerned with the promotion and protection of human rights;
- x. To obtain information from ASEAN Member States on the promotion and protection of human rights;
- xi. To develop common approaches and positions on human rights matters of interest to ASEAN;
- xii. To prepare studies on thematic issues of human rights in ASEAN;
- xiii. To submit an annual report on its activities, or other reports if deemed necessary, to the ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting; and
- xiv. To perform any other task as maybe assigned to it by the ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting.

Each Representative of the AICHR is appointed by their respective government for the term of three years, renewable once. The AICHR Representatives, in the discharge of his or her duties, shall act impartially in accordance with the ASEAN Charter and the TOR of the AICHR.

The AICHR TOR also sets out the line of reporting of the AICHR, the conduct of meeting(s), the role of the Chair of the AICHR, decision-making process, the release of public information and the AICHR's relationship with other human rights bodies within ASEAN.

The Terms of Reference (TOR) of AICHR can be accessed on the ASEANWEB. You can also browse AICHR's Regional Website at www.aichr.org

THE PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES OF THE AICHR

The AICHR's priority areas on human rights are found in the Five-Year Work Plan 2010–2015. The Work Plan is developed based on the 14 mandates of the AICHR as contained in the TOR. Each year, the AICHR specifies what are their high priority programmes and activities for the year based on the Work Plan and in response to emerging exigencies on human rights in the region.

The activities of the AICHR in the short and medium term include:

- Undertake needs assessment for capacity building;
- Complete a stocktaking of existing human rights instruments acceded and ratified by ASEAN Member States;
- Conduct workshops on various themes related to human rights;
- Conduct trainings on human rights for specific target groups, such as government officials, law enforcement officers, teachers, etc.;

- Strengthen the ASEAN Secretariat's support for the AICHR;
- Disseminate information relating to the work of the AICHR including publications in both English and national languages;
- Share best practices of effective implementation of international human rights treaty obligations among ASEAN Member States;
- Coordinate with relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies to ensure the effective implementation of ASEAN instruments related to human rights;
- Identify the current and potential human rights matters of interest to ASEAN; and
- Prepare studies on thematic issues of human rights in ASEAN.



The AICHR at the Signing Ceremony of the Phnom Penh Statement on the Adoption of the AHRD

THE ASEAN HUMAN RIGHTS DECLARATION (AHRD)

Article 4.2 of the TOR of the AICHR states that the AICHR is mandated to develop an “*ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (AHRD) with a view to establishing a framework for human rights cooperation through various ASEAN conventions and other instruments dealing with human rights.*”

In 2011, the AICHR commenced to discharge this mandate by setting up a Drafting Group to prepare the basic draft of the AHRD. Upon receiving the basic draft of the AHRD from the Drafting Group, the AICHR submitted their first Progress Report on the drafting of the AHRD to the ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting (AMM) at the AMM Retreat in January 2012. In their first Progress Report, the AICHR set out the way forward in drafting the AHRD, which includes scheduling meetings regularly dedicated to the drafting of the AHRD, engagement with the relevant stakeholders, submitting

progress reports to the AMM, and setting the deadline of submitting the final version of the AHRD to the AMM before the ASEAN Summit in November 2012.

In the drafting of the AHRD, the AICHR consulted and dialogued with representatives of ASEAN Sectoral Bodies, national, regional and international civil society organisations (CSOs) and human rights experts. The AICHR was very appreciative of the participation and contributions by the various stakeholders, which helped make the draft AHRD a comprehensive declaration reflecting not only the aspiration of the peoples of ASEAN but also adding value to the international norms and standards of human rights by the inclusion of the right to peace, right to development and the avoidance of stigma for those suffering from communicable diseases such as HIV.

The AICHR submitted the first draft of the AHRD to the ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting (AMM) at the 45th AMM in July



Panel Discussion on "The AHRD and the ASEAN Community Building by 2015"

2012. With the submission of the first draft, the AICHR sought further guidance and instructions from the AMM on the next steps in drafting the AHRD. A refined second draft of the AHRD was presented to the Foreign Ministers during their Informal Meeting (IAMM) in September 2012, before it was submitted to the ASEAN Leaders. The ASEAN Leaders adopted the AHRD on 18 November 2012 and signed the “Phnom Penh Statement on the Adoption of the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration”. The AHRD is a landmark ASEAN document, which sets the framework for further promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the region. The AHRD represents the aspirations and determination of the ASEAN Member States and their peoples for a people-oriented ASEAN Community, as stipulated in the ASEAN Charter. The AHRD also reflects ASEAN’s commitments to the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, and other international human rights instruments, to which ASEAN Member States are parties to as well as to other relevant ASEAN declarations and instruments pertaining to human rights.

Given the significance of the AHRD and the Phnom Penh Statement, the AICHR has prioritised to the dissemination of these documents, including raising awareness on their importance and relevance, translation into national languages of the AMS and uploading the translated versions to the AICHR Website. The AICHR also discussed and consulted relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies on the possibility of developing ASEAN legal instruments on human rights to implement the protection and promotion of human rights enshrined in the AHRD.

To raise awareness on the significance of these documents, the AICHR, in partnership with the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR), held a joint event themed “Contributing to the ASEAN Community Building through the Implementation of the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (AHRD)”. The event was organized in conjunction with the Celebration of the 46th ASEAN Day at the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta, Indonesia. At the event, the AICHR also launched the “*ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (AHRD) and the Phnom Penh Statement on the Adoption of the AHRD, and its Translations*” (AHRD Book), which contained the translation of the AHRD to the main languages of the ASEAN Member States. The Launching was marked with the presentation of the AHRD Book to representatives from parliamentarians, business organisations, think tank and academia, civil society organisations, and youth leaders. During the event, a panel discussion on “The AHRD and the ASEAN Community Building by 2015” was also convened with Representatives from the AICHR and CPR as panel discussants.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

1. *What does intergovernmental mean?*

A. Intergovernmental means that the organisation is established by the agreement among the nation-states. Members of the organisation are composed of sovereign states (referred to as Member States).

2. *Why are the AICHR members referred to as Representatives and not Commissioners?*

A. The members of the AICHR are Representatives of the Member States of ASEAN, accountable to their respective Governments, appointed with full mandate, with due respect to the principles of the ASEAN Charter, their Terms of Reference, international human rights standards and bear the responsibility to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms of the peoples of ASEAN.

3. *What are the duties of the AICHR?*

A. The Terms of Reference (TOR) of the AICHR stipulates the 14 mandates of AICHR. The AICHR is a principal organ of ASEAN and the overarching institution on human rights with overall responsibility for the promotion and protection of human rights in ASEAN.

The AICHR as the overarching institution in ASEAN on human rights shall work with other ASEAN Bodies dealing with human rights to align with the AICHR as well as other ASEAN Bodies on common areas of interest. Through its cooperation with other ASEAN Bodies and with external partners, the AICHR will develop a regional cooperation on human rights.

4. The AICHR often uses the term “overarching” when describing their mandate. What does it mean?

A. Although there are other ASEAN Bodies dealing with human rights, such as those specializing on the issue of the rights of women and children or of migrant workers, the AICHR has the overall responsibility in ASEAN to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms. The AICHR also deals with all categories of human rights such as political, civil, economic, social, and cultural rights including rights of different groups.

5. How will the AICHR work with other entities, such as the civil society organisations, non-government organisations, the national human rights institutions, other human rights organisations, and UN, regional sectoral bodies as well as private sector?

A. As a consultative body, the AICHR shall consult and cooperate with other entities as deemed appropriate. The AICHR needs to subscribe a method for engagement with the different types of organisation or entity.

6. If my rights are violated, can I submit my grievances to the AICHR or to the AICHR Representative of my country? How does the public communicate with the AICHR?

A. As an intergovernmental body, the AICHR focuses its work on the regional cooperation of the promotion and protection of human rights. In its current TOR, endorsed in July 2009 by the ASEAN Foreign Ministers, the AICHR does not have the mandate to handle individual cases.

Organisations or individuals may send letters for the attention of the AICHR through the AICHR Chair, and copying all the other AICHR Representatives and the ASEAN Secretariat.

7. To what extent does the work of the AICHR contribute or create an impact on human rights in the region and the human rights of the people in the Southeast Asian region?

A. The impact on human rights can be derived by creating awareness in the peoples of ASEAN on their rights. In addition, the systematic approach of thematic studies with deliverable results to the public will surely create an impact on human rights. The annual report of the AICHR, presented to the Foreign Ministers, opinions given by the AICHR, public information on the work of the AICHR could certainly create an impact on human rights.

8. The AICHR seems to focus more on the promotion side rather than the protection of human rights, is it true?

A. The AICHR works under the spirit of consultation and consensus. However, it is not an obstacle to the promotion and protection of human rights, especially on educating and raising awareness on human rights to the people of ASEAN.



The AICHR meeting with the CPR

The promotion of human rights should be done in parallel with other developments, to ensure that strong protection mechanisms are created.

9. What is the role of the Secretary-General of ASEAN and the ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC)?

A. The Secretary-General of ASEAN may bring relevant issues to the attention of the AICHR with regards to carrying out his/her duties and responsibilities in accordance with the provisions of the ASEAN Charter. The Secretary-General can also raise attention to issues related to the implementation of ASEAN agreements and decisions.

The ASEAN Secretariat currently serves as the regional secretariat of the AICHR. The ASEAN Secretariat maintains effective lines of communication between the AICHR with other ASEAN Bodies, external parties and other relevant stakeholders, as well as disseminates information on the latest developments of ASEAN and the AICHR to those concerned. The ASEAN Secretariat is the custodian of the AICHR Fund and the institutional memory of ASEAN and of the AICHR. The ASEAN Secretariat supports the implementation of the AICHR's priority programmes and activities, as well as propose, assess, and assist in project formulation and implementation of the AICHR's Work Plan.

10. Where can I find more information about the AICHR?

A. General information and the latest news updates about ASEAN, including the press releases of the AICHR, can be accessed through the ASEANWEB (www.asean.org). The AICHR also has its own regional website (www.aichr.org).

THE REPRESENTATIVES OF AICHR (2013 – 2015)

The Representatives of the AICHR are selected and appointed by their respective Governments with due consideration to gender equality, integrity and competence in the field of human rights. The AICHR Representatives have a term of office of three years, and may be re-appointed for one more term.



Brunei Darussalam

H.E. Pehin Dato Dr. Awang Hj. Ahmad bin Hj. Jumat



Education:

- BA, University of Malaya, Malaysia.
- M. Ed, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada.
- D. Ed, University of South California.

Career:

- 1965-1969: Brunei Administrative Officer, Menteri Besar Office.
- 1969-1971: Educational Administrator and Senior Administrator with the Department of Education.

- 1973-1975: Head of Planning Unit with the Department of Education.
- 1975-1977: Deputy Director of Education.
- 1977-1982: Director of Education.
- 1982-1983: Director of Establishment, Head of State Civil Service
- 1983-1984: Director of Diplomatic Services.
- 1984-1986: Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- 1986-2001: Deputy Minister of Education.
- 2001: Acting Minister of Development.
- 2002: Minister of Development.
- 2005: Minister of Industry and Primary Resources.
- 2008-2010: Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports.
- 2011-present: Representative of Brunei Darussalam to the AICHR.



Cambodia

H.E. Mr. Srun Thirith



Education:

- Bachelor of Law, University of Law, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.
- Master of Public Policy, Flinders University, Australia.

Career:

- 2009-present: Member of the Cambodian Government Jurists Council, in charge of drafting and reviewing laws and policies and providing legal expertise to public institutions.
- 2009-present: Member of National Codex Committee.
- 2009-present: Member of Legal and administrative Lexicon Committee.
- 2009-present: Member of Legal Consultant Group for the State Secretariat of Civil Aviation (SSCA), in charge of drafting regulations and advising the SSCA on legal issues.
- 2009-present: Member of the Secretariat of the Committee for Investors' Dispute Settlement Outside the Special Economic Zone, the Council for Development of Cambodia.
- 2013-present: Member of the Cambodian Human Rights Committee.
- 2013-present: Representative of Cambodia to the AICHR.



Indonesia

H.E. Mr. Rafendi Djamin



Education:

- BA in Sociology, the University of Indonesia, Jakarta-Indonesia.
- MA in Development Studies, Institute of Social Studies The Hague, Hague-Netherlands.

Career:

- 1992-1993: INFOHD the Netherlands, as Chairperson and Consultant on Human Rights in Indonesia.
- 1992-2001: Amsterdam Municipality, as Social Security Consultant.
- 2001-2003: Amsterdam Municipality, as Senior Social Security Consultant.
- 2001-2003: Project coordinator for Campaign against Impunity in Indonesia.
- 2003-present: Coordinator of the Coalition of Indonesian NGO for International Human Rights Advocacy.
- 2006: Independent evaluator of Indonesian National Commission on Violence against Women (KOMNAS PEREMPUAN), Jakarta.
- 2009-present: Representative of Indonesia to the AICHR.



Lao PDR

H.E. Mr. Phoukhong Sisoulath



Education:

- MA in International Law, Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO).
- PGDip in International Law, Nottingham University.
- Fulbright American Studies Institute: Reform in American History and Law at Boston College.

Career:

- 2003 (Jan)-2013 (May): National Project Manager of the International Law Project, Phase I, then on the MoFA secondment-full time Project Manager of the International Law Project Phase II and Phase III, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- 2013 (May-Dec): Member of the Secretariat, the Legal Sector Master Plan on the Rule of Law at the Ministry of Justice.
- 2011 (Jun)-2012 (Dec): Assistant to the Lao PDR Representative, then Lao PDR Alternate Representative to the AICHR.
- 2013 (Feb): Representative of the Lao PDR to the AICHR (for the term 2013-2015).
- 2014 (Mar)-present: Director-General, Department of Treaties and Law, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



Malaysia

H.E. Tan Sri Dato' Sri Dr. Muhammad Shafee Abdullah



Education:

- Royal Military College
- LL.B., (Hons-Malaya)
- LL.M., (LSE-London)
- LL.D., (UJEL)

Career:

- 1977-1981: Part-time Law Lecturer, University Malaya and University Sains Malaysia.
- 1977-1983: Deputy Public Prosecutor, Federal Counsel, Attorney-General's Chambers, Malaysia.
- 1979-1983: Federal Counsel, Ministry of Home Affairs (ad hoc basis).
- 1985-1987: Representative Correspondent for Malaysia & Singapore for the Intellectual Property Review, IPR (Oxford).
- 1985-present: Advocate & Solicitor, Malaya (Messrs Shafee & Co).
- 1986-1989: Editorial Board of the Current Law Journal (CLJ).
- 1988-present: Ad hoc Advisor to the Malaysian Government and to the Ruling Party.

- 2004-2009: Appointed by His Majesty the Yang di-Pertuan Agong as a Commission Member to the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM).
- 2006-present: Director, Asian Finance Bank.
- 2006-2009: Council Member to the Malaysian Bar, Member of Human Rights Committee, Bar Council, Malaysia.
- 2009-present: Board Member of the University of Malaya.
- 2009-present: Representative of Malaysia to the AICHR.



Myanmar

H.E. Amb. Kyaw Tint Swe



Education:

- B.Com (Hons), University of Yangon.
- Postgraduate Diploma in International Relations and Development, Institute of Social Studies, the Netherlands.

Career:

- 2004, 2006, 2008: Vice President of UN General Assembly.
- 2001-2009: Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Union of Myanmar, New York.
- 2011-2013: Vice Chair, Myanmar National Human Rights Commission.
- 2009 – Present: Representative of Myanmar to the AICHR.



Philippines

H.E. Amb. Rosario Gonzalez Manalo



Education:

- Bachelor of Science in Foreign Service, University of the Philippines.
- Bachelor of Science in Jurisprudence, University of the Philippines.
- Bachelor of Laws, University of the Philippines.
- Master of Arts in Public Administration, University of the Philippines.
- Master of Arts in International Studies and Diplomacy, Long Island University, NY, USA.

Career:

- 1959: First Filipina to pass the Foreign Service Competitive Examination direct from being a University graduate with no previous work experience.
- 1967-1997: Was a Career Foreign Service Officer of the Philippines and Career Ambassador having served as such in Belgium and the EEC, Luxembourg, France, Portugal, UNESCO, and in the five Nordic States and three Baltic States.

- 1997-2002: Deputy Foreign Minister of the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs.
- 2002: Special Envoy to Latin America of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.
- 2005-2009: Director, European Studies Program of Ateneo de Manila University.
- 2006: Adviser to President Fidel V. Ramos, Philippine Eminent Person for the ASEAN Charter.
- 2007: Chairperson of the High-Level Task Force on the Drafting of the ASEAN Charter.
- 2007: Special Envoy of the President for the Drafting of the ASEAN Charter.
- 2007-present: Philippine representative to the Board of Governors, Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF).
- 2008-2009: Special Envoy of the President for AHRB.
- 2009-2010: Philippine Commissioner to the Shanghai Expo.
- 2009-present: Dean of the HZB School of International Relations and Diplomacy of the Philippine Women's University.
- 2009-present: Philippine Representative to the AICHR.



Singapore

H.E. Amb. Chan Heng Chee



Education:

- B.Soc.Sci (Hons), National University of Singapore.
- M.A., Cornell University.
- Ph.D, National University of Singapore.

Career:

- 1989-1991: Permanent Representative to the United Nations.
- July 1996-July 2012: Ambassador of Singapore to the United States.
- 2012-present: Ambassador-at-Large with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Singapore.
- April 2012-present: Board of Trustees of the National University of Singapore.
- July 2012-present: Member of the Presidential Council for Minority Rights.
- July 2012-present: Vice-Chairman of the World Economic Forum's Global Council on Urban Development.
- September 2012-present: Chairman of the Lee Kuan Yew Centre for Innovative Cities in the Singapore University of Technology and Design.

- October 2012-present: Asia Society Board of Trustees.
- November 2012-present: Representative of Singapore to the AICHR.
- January 2013-present: Board of Governors of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University.
- May 2013-present: Board Member of the Lowy Institute for International Policy.
- September 2013-present: Chairman of the National Arts Council.



Thailand

H.E. Dr. Seree Nonthasoot



Education:

- LL.B., Thammasat University, Bangkok, Thailand.
- Barrister-at-Law, Bar Association of Thailand.
- LL.M. (International Trade Law), Columbia University School of Law, New York, USA (Fulbright Scholarship).
- Magister Juris (European and Comparative Law), University of Oxford (Chevening Scholarship).
- Doctor of Philosophy, University of Oxford, England, United Kingdom.

Career:

- 1995-2000: Legal Advisor, Office of the Council of State, Office of the Prime Minister.
- 1999-present: Lecturer in International Law, Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies, Mahidol University.
- 2003-2012: Legal Counsel, State Enterprise Policy Office, Ministry of Finance.
- 2004-2006: Expert Member, Government Legal Reform Committee.
- 2007-2009: Legal Counsel, Treasury Department, Ministry of Finance.

- 2011: Representative of Thailand in the Drafting Group for the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration.
- 2012-present: Director, KTB Law Co., Ltd.
- 2012-present: Senior Executive Vice President, Institute of Research and Development for Public Enterprises (IRDP)
- 2013-present: Representative of Thailand to the AICHR.



Viet Nam

H.E. Ms. Le Thi Thu



Education:

- Master of International Public Policy, School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, the United States of America.
- Bachelor of Arts, Hanoi National University, Viet Nam

Career:

- 1996: Desk officer, ASEAN Department, MOFA
- 2004-2008: Second Secretary, Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam in Thailand.
- 2008-2009: Head of Division of General Affairs, ASEAN Department, MOFA.
- 2009-2010: Assistant Director-General, ASEAN Department, MOFA.
- 2010-present: Deputy Director-General, ASEAN Department, MOFA.
- 2011-2012: Assistant to the Representative of Viet Nam to AICHR.
- 2013-present: Representative of Viet Nam to the AICHR.

AICHR ACTIVITIES



ASEAN Youth Debates on Human Rights, April 2013, Manila



AICHR Regional Workshop on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Post 2015 and Human Rights, December 2013, Jakarta. (Photo credit: Ministry of Foreign Affairs Indonesia)

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