

ASEAN@50

Volume 2



# **Voices of ASEAN: What Does ASEAN Mean to ASEAN Peoples?**

Edited by  
**Ponciano Intal, Jr. and Lydia Ruddy**



Economic Research Institute  
for ASEAN and East Asia



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## Foreword



I congratulate the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), the Permanent Mission of the Philippines to ASEAN and the Philippine ASEAN National Secretariat for publishing this 5-volume publication on perspectives on the making, substance, significance and future of ASEAN. This valuable publication, forming part of the Philippines' commemorative activities in celebration of ASEAN's golden anniversary, highlights ASEAN as one of the world's most successful and enduring regional organizations.

It pleases me to note that this printed work equally supports the development priorities of President Rodrigo Duterte and the Philippine Chairmanship priorities — building a people-oriented and people-centered ASEAN, maintaining peace and stability in the region, cooperating in maritime security, advancing inclusive and innovation-led growth, promoting a resilient ASEAN, and establishing ASEAN as a model of regionalism and a global player. Consistent with President Duterte's pursuit of an independent foreign policy for the benefit of the Filipino people, the publication also affirms the ASEAN Community Blueprints in raising the profile and awareness on the ASEAN pillars of political-security, economic and socio-cultural communities.

We seek the aid of the Almighty and are hopeful that this publication will provide the reader with greater insights on ASEAN's history, will be used by decision makers, government officials, analysts, and the people of ASEAN, in charting the future course of the region .

Mabuhay!

Manila, August 2017

**Alan Peter S. Cayetano**  
Secretary of Foreign Affairs  
Republic of the Philippines

## Foreword



Recent turbulence in what was often assumed to be the soundly anchored, mature political and economic trading regimes of North America and Europe reminds us that public attitude should not be taken for granted. This is an important lesson for us all on the 50th anniversary of the Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN).

**Voices on ASEAN:** What does ASEAN mean to ASEAN peoples? is therefore a timely and welcome contribution on this significant anniversary of ASEAN. The information contained therein should not be taken lightly but be used to ensure ASEAN enters its second half century not resting on the laurels of its remarkable economic achievements to date, but guides it forward in line with the hopes and expectations of its citizens.

We have seen how over the last 50 years ASEAN has been remarkably adept at providing a platform for creating a new regional identity, political and economic realities, in an area once noted for internal conflict and divided by colonial histories. ASEAN has been a way to address these priority challenges through creating stability and fostering economic growth.

But as ASEAN looks to the future, this study reminds us of both the gaps and expectations amongst ASEAN citizens concerning the region. Awareness of ASEAN is higher than it has ever been, but awareness of ASEAN is primarily for its economic pillar. Yet the concerns of its people go beyond the economic sphere. Corruption is the issue of number one concern of almost half its people, followed by climate change and natural disasters. Indeed, only one of the top five issues relates directly to the economic pillar championed by ASEAN.

If the leaders of ASEAN can address these concerns with the vigour and foresight employed by them in the first 50 years, then ASEAN will be truly remarkable, continue to be relevant to its citizens on a more personal level while also shepherding the region's economic future.

For this important study, I would like to thank all those who contributed to Voices on ASEAN: What does ASEAN mean to ASEAN peoples?, the second of our five-volume series to mark the 50th anniversary of ASEAN. In addition to my colleagues at ERIA who analysed the data and wrote the integrative chapter of the volume, I would like to pay a special tribute to our 10 research institute network partners who worked tirelessly in each of the 10 ASEAN member states to implement the surveys, arrange for numerous focus group discussions, share their findings with the team at ERIA, and write the country chapters in the volume.

Jakarta, August 2017



**Hidetoshi Nishimura**  
President  
Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia



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