

PRESS RELEASE



Multi-sectoral Workshop Tackles Issues on ASEAN Beyond 2015

Jakarta - 16 November 2013: The Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), in partnership with the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), held a multi-sectoral workshop on “ASEAN and AEC Beyond 2015” on November 16, 2013 at the new CSIS building in Tanah Abang, Jakarta. The workshop represents the first of a series of workshops to be held in the next two weeks wherein the results of a major ERIA project which puts together a number of thought/issues papers on various areas with respect to ASEAN and AEC beyond 2015 will be presented and discussed.

In his opening remarks, ERIA Executive Director, Professor Hidetoshi Nishimura, said that the series of workshops is the culmination of an ERIA initiative began in 2012 which is in response to and support of the clarion call of Indonesian President, H.E. Dr. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, “to start the successful discussion on what ASEAN would be beyond 2015 and how to achieve such vision” as well as to the Declaration of the ASEAN Leaders “to develop an ASEAN Community’s Post-2015 vision and its central elements for endorsement by the ASEAN Summit in 2014”.

Professor Nishimura also said that the workshops are meant to solicit feedback from various sectors on some of the critical issues, especially on the way forward for ASEAN and AEC beyond 2015, precisely to “achieve the kind of successful discussion that President H.E. Dr. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono would like to happen in the region”.

For his part, CSIS President Dr. Yose Rizal Damuri welcomed the workshop participants to the new CSIS building and extended his congratulations to ERIA for taking on the challenge to help move ASEAN forward and beyond 2015. He likewise thanked ERIA for having CSIS as partner in the conduct of the day’s workshop and looked forward to having more of such partnerships.

Keynoting the event was Director General Mr. Iman Pambagyo of the International Trade Cooperation of Indonesia’s Ministry of Trade whose initial suggestion of having a comprehensive study on the issues related to moving ASEAN forward, led to ERIA’s major undertaking. Mr. Iman underscored the fact that 2015 is not and should not be looked at as the

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end but rather just the beginning of coming up with a truly integrated ASEAN post 2015. In this light, he noted the importance of gaining lessons from the experiences of other regional integration initiatives like the European Union and at the same time making sure that ASEAN has its own identity. As such, it is important, according to the Director General, to take cognizance of the various issues – political and social – that may impact on the realization of AEC beyond 2015 and find solutions to address them.

The Jakarta workshop focused on issues revolving around having an “Integrated and Highly Contestable ASEAN” or more popularly known as moving “towards a single market and production base” in ASEAN.

The next three workshops will be held in Kuala Lumpur on November 19 focusing on a “Competitive and Dynamic ASEAN”; in Yangon on November 23 focusing on “An Inclusive and Resilient ASEAN”; and in Manila on November 26 focusing on “Global ASEAN”.

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