

Chapter 7

Conclusion

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http://www.eria.org/RPR_FY2015_No.15_Chapter_7.pdf, p.24.

national standards bodies, this approach may not be an effective use of time and resources. In this regard, publishing all information online and providing a contact person for further inquiries could be an ideal solution.

- ***Enhance technical infrastructure and competency in laboratory testing, certification, accreditation, and calibration.*** Internationally accepted procedures and guidelines should form the basis of this process. This constant focus on improvement and pursuit of world-class practices will ensure that ASEAN-origin businesses or foreign businesses seeking to leverage the harmonised sectoral standards and MRAs in the region can expect a consistent and predictable business environment.
- ***Encourage ASEAN member states to share with each other the use of conformity assessment facilities*** when such facilities do not exist in a particular member state. Financial resources may not be sufficient in cases where a country has to develop facilities and personnel to conduct conformity assessment procedures. These efforts may also take a long time to complete. The sharing of such facilities could temporarily alleviate these resource constraints and even serve as an approach to limit redundancies.

7. Conclusion

The implementation of standard and conformance measures under the AEC Blueprint has not been without challenges, and the reality is that full implementation of all measures by the end of 2015 is unlikely. The formal target of establishing the AEC by 31 December 2015 is, therefore, not an end goal but an initial milestone for ASEAN economic integration. In that respect, the post-2015 agenda, i.e. AEC 2025, would prioritise any unfinished work from AEC 2015, while expanding the coverage of sectors under standards and conformance beyond the priority integration sectors. While ASEAN member states are taking steps towards implementation, there needs to be a greater appreciation that standards and conformance form the technical foundation for the free flow of goods in a true single market and production base envisioned under the AEC Blueprint. This paradigm shift is arguably not achievable in the short term either in a country or as a region. However, the ASEAN has the opportunity to focus attention to this lagging area during the AEC 2025 implementation period by inculcating values and adjusting attitudes to achieve the foundation necessary for greater standards and conformance activities in the region.