




“ [A]t the time that Foreign Minister of the five states signed the Bangkok Declaration establishing ASEAN in 1967, ... regionalism and regional identity were new concepts which did not readily inspire public support. For we had long maintained strong political, economic, and cultural ties with others outside the region. We identified more with them than with ourselves of the region. But since then, there has emerged a new consciousness, and we have undergone fundamental and willful changes ... The Association has given our respective countries the framework within which to strengthen social, economic, and cultural ties, and to develop cooperation where, hitherto, none had existed.”

PRIME MINISTER KUKRIT PRAMOJ OF THAILAND
at the Opening of the Meeting of the Heads of Government
on 23 February 1976 at Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia



“ We have just put our signatures on very important documents [*Declaration of ASEAN Concord and Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia*] ... They are the manifestation of our determination to promote peace, progress, stability and welfare of our peoples through closer cooperation in all aspects.”


PRESIDENT SOEHARTO OF INDONESIA

at the Closing of the Meeting of the Heads of Government
on 24 February 1976 at Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia

“ Up till yesterday, a favorite question posed by ASEAN-watchers was: “Has ASEAN a future?” When our officials follow up on the agreements we have reached at this meeting, their question will now be: “what kind of future is it be for ASEAN?” ”

PRIME MINISTER LEE KUAN YEW OF SINGAPORE

at the Closing of the Meeting of the Heads of Government
on 24 February 1976 at Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia



“ I am ... an ASEANist. I am deeply committed to ASEAN which has played such a critical role in turning what was an area of turmoil, antagonism, conflict – sometimes violent conflict, an area with no history of cooperation whatsoever, into a zone of cooperative peace and prosperity.”

PRIME MINISTER MAHATHIR MOHAMAD OF MALAYSIA

at the Asia Society Conference on
‘Asia and the Changing World’, Tokyo, Japan, 1993

“ As members of the ASEAN family, sometimes we give, sometimes we receive, and sometimes we must be considerate in reaching compromise. As I have said before, this is the beauty of ASEAN.”

PRESIDENT SUSILO BAMBANG YUDHOYONO OF INDONESIA

in his essay in this volume



“ At the 2002 ASEAN Summit in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and against the advice that the idea would not fly, I floated the vision of an ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) for study by ministers and officials ... The AEC was an attempt to change the tenor of conversation on economic issues in ASEAN and put it on a more positive footing. My hope was that the ASEAN Member States would coalesce around this concept and recognise the opportunities presented by a shared community.”


PRIME MINISTER GOH CHOK TONG OF SINGAPORE

in his essay in this volume

“ More than just a regional community, [ASEAN] must be a dynamic force in Asia towards maximising the benefits of globalisation ... uplifting the poor in our region.”

PRESIDENT GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO OF THE PHILIPPINES

in her essay in this volume



“If the Southeast Asian peoples are to embrace ASEAN as their “Community” ... they must see it as a pervading, beneficial influence on their daily lives. They, as stakeholders, must regard the ASEAN vision as their very own.”

PRESIDENT FIDEL RAMOS OF THE PHILIPPINES

Address at the ASEAN Executive Management Programme for High Level Executives of Public and Private Sectors of Thailand, Bangkok, 8 August 2013

“A true community must be a community of people, a concept that should be at the heart of the ASEAN Community. ASEAN must strive to bring its member countries together and create a sense of shared destiny of peace and prosperity for all ASEAN peoples based on common ASEAN values with an ASEAN identity. Otherwise, ASEAN will continue to be seen as a loose grouping struggling to find its voice on the global stage.”

PRIME MINISTER ABHISIT VEJJAJIVA OF THAILAND
in his essay in this volume