



Domain Area: ASEAN: Reaching Across Borders

Topic: Defending Against Uncertainty

Guiding Question: How might we prepare to face a diverse range of future crises and challenges ahead together?

General Information

ASEAN was founded in 1967 on the basis of fostering robust regional cooperation between Southeast Asian states to further the common interests of the region.¹ Article 1 of the ASEAN Charter states the organisation's intention to enhance "peace, security and stability" and "the well-being and livelihood" of Southeast Asians.² Despite this aspiration, Southeast Asians have not been spared the devastating myriad of crises that have plagued the world in the last few years such as the U.S.-China trade war, COVID-19 crisis, and the 2021-2023 inflation surge.³ Ranging from security concerns to social and ecological issues, every crisis stems from its own unique root causes and demands targeted solutions. However, as Southeast Asian countries undergo greater economic and political integration with each other and the world at large, many of these localised problems transcend the borders of individual ASEAN member states. With the shifting balance of power in the Asia-Pacific region and proliferation of climate-induced ecological disasters projected to threaten the geopolitical stability and prosperity of the region as a whole, ASEAN intervention to facilitate greater cooperation

¹ The ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration) Bangkok, 8 August 1967.

<https://agreement.asean.org/media/download/20140117154159.pdf>.

² Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). 2007. "Charter of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations." November 20, 2007.

<https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/images/archive/publications/ASEAN-Charter.pdf>.

³ "Singapore, Malaysia among Exporters Most at Risk from US-China Trade War: Fitch Solutions." The Straits Times. August 6, 2019.

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between its member states in confronting the diverse range of future crises and challenges might become increasingly necessary.

Scope of Policy Proposal

You should consider the following points and address these in your policy proposal. If you are intending to take on a specific perspective (e.g., a certain Ministry, organisation), do state it clearly in your proposal.

- 1) **Significance of Interstate Collaboration:** Your policy ought to substantiate how cooperative efforts within ASEAN can serve as a multiplier for the national policies of each member state.
- 2) **Existing Intergovernmental Agreements:** Do address the inadequacies of current ASEAN initiatives, and explain how your proposed policy intends to ameliorate these shortcomings.
- 3) **Universally Accessible Solutions:** Your policy should cater to the fundamental disparities in economic and political development within ASEAN, so as to offer actionable approaches that can be applied region-wide.

Points of Interest

- Considering potential sources of division within ASEAN ie. religion / ethnicity / culture / politics
- Potential sources of foreign intervention and influence that might hinder or help ASEAN collaboration
- Mandate or political mechanisms of the chosen organisation





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