



Diversity & Inclusion Youth Conference

# RESEARCH REPORT

## DIYC Regional Council (ASEAN)

*“ASEAN Mechanism to Prevent Conflict in the Region for Peaceful Coexistence”*  
Chairperson : Tang Kah Wheng

**Diversity and Inclusion Youth Conference 2018**  
**Universiti Teknologi Malaysia , Johor, Malaysia**  
**6<sup>th</sup> March 2018 – 11<sup>th</sup> March 2018**  
**“Young Moderates for Global Peaceful Co-existence”**

Organized By:



In Collaboration With :



## **DIYC 2018 THEME : “Young Moderates for Global Peaceful Coexistence”**

**Peaceful Co-Existence** - The aim of peaceful co-existence is to establish a foundation where all sides, having found the creed to respect each other, can enhance and enrich their respective philosophical and religious traditions. This is achieved by adopting moderation as a way of life steeped in the search for justice, equilibrium and equity.

### **ABSTRACT**

The Diversity and Inclusion Youth Conference (DIYC) seeks to gather the youth together to understand how the values and practice of moderation, among themselves, can have a significant contribution towards peaceful co-existence in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious environment. By bringing together youth from various countries, this conference seeks to dissect and analyze the varied, multifaceted and evolving meanings of what it takes to create and maintain the peaceful co-existence between communities in their respective countries and regions.

The collective voices of the moderates needs to be heard to quell the extremist rhetoric that completely contradicts with the culture of peace. The rising threat of terrorism and violent extremism across the globe was a grim reminder of the need for sustained efforts to combat this phenomenon. The seeds of intolerance, hatred and extremism must not be allowed to take root and eradicating terrorism requires a collective global effort through moderation as an age-old principle embodied in all the great world religions and personified by many leaders, including Martin Luther King, Jr., Nelson Mandela and Malala Yousafzai.

Promoting a culture of peace was one of the ASEAN’s intrinsic values, as affirmed by its “Community Vision 2025” plan and other policies that are firmly committed to do its part to inculcate and uphold the values and norms of peace, harmony, intercultural understanding, and the rule of law, good governance, tolerance, inclusiveness and moderation. ASEAN’s endorsement of moderation via the Langkawi Declaration on the Global Movement of Moderates attests that it is very much an ASEAN value, deeply entrenched within the *ASEAN Way*.

What can the world learn from Malaysia and ASEAN that is otherwise lacking in other regions where conflict is rife? Moderation is the pillar of Malaysia's success in dealing with ethnic and religious diversity. The UNGA Resolution on Moderation tabled by Malaysia during the 72nd UNGA is a testament to the country’s well-known track record of being a society which practices moderation, tolerance and mutual respect as this initiative was well-received by UN member states. Malaysia believes that moderation could complement the mission and work of the United Nations to proclaim 2019 as the International Year of Moderation, and DIYC aims to emphasize the promotion of dialogue and education in fostering inter-religious, inter-ethnic and intercultural understanding and dialogue, with broad participation amongst youths from around the world.

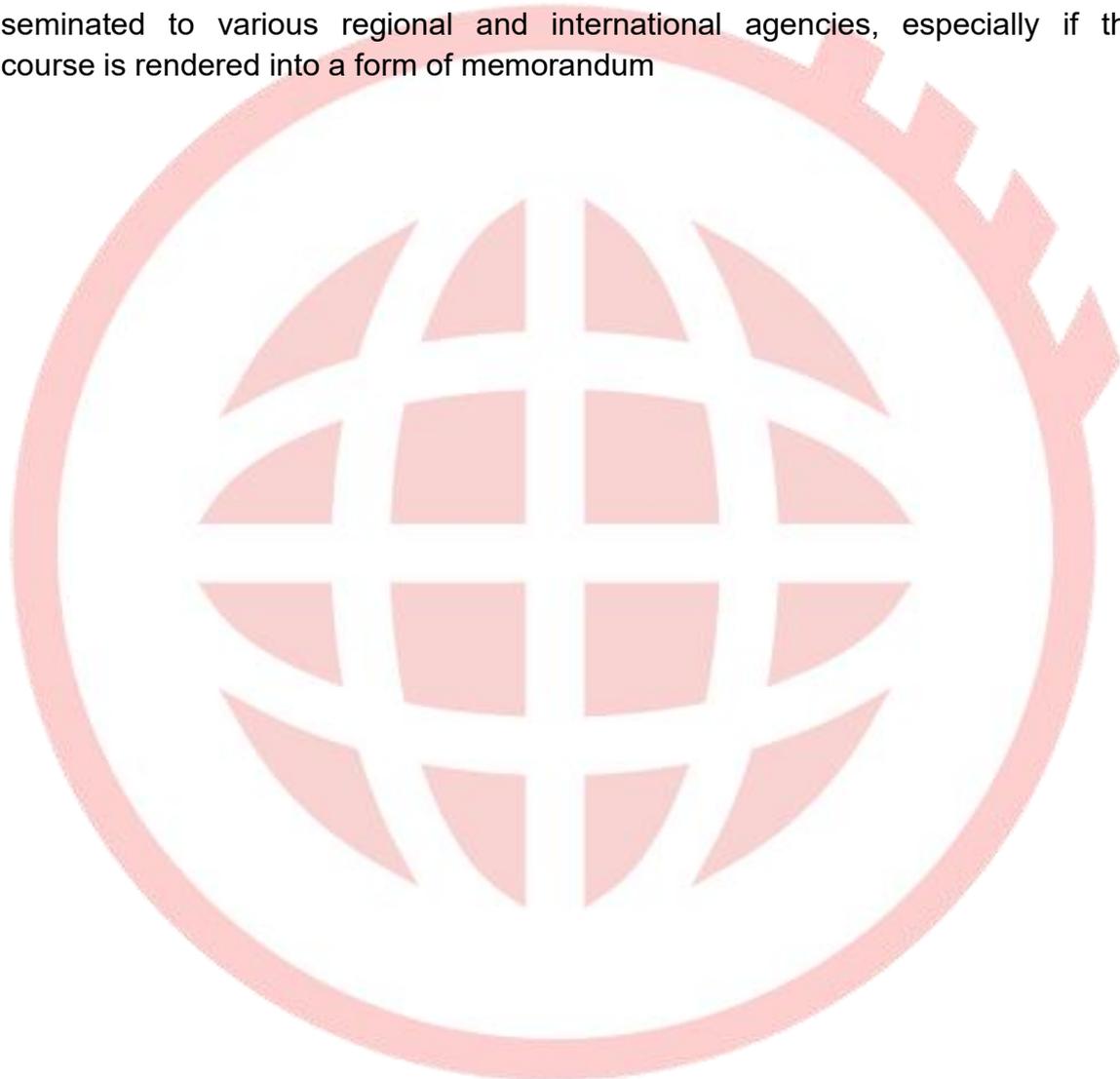
During the conference, participants will acquire the knowledge and tools to strengthen their ability to communicate across differences, interact with one another and look at diversity as an asset for cross-fertilization and inter-cultural exchange

from which mutual trust; better understanding and a global mindset can emerge and proliferate.

### **CONCLUSION**

The Diversity and Inclusion Youth Conference seeks to highlight the pertinent issues at play. Indeed, the above is by no means easy to answer. But taking the first step, in the right direction, can add to the clarity. The Conference seeks to gather youths to understand the lessons of Malaysia with the attendant aim to understand how the voices of the youth from other regions can jointly enrich this debate too.

The outcome of the deliberations from the conference can also be shared and disseminated to various regional and international agencies, especially if the discourse is rendered into a form of memorandum





## DIYC Regional Council (ASEAN)

Tang Kah Wheng

*“ASEAN Mechanism to Prevent Conflict in the Region for Peaceful Coexistence”*

**Conflict Resolution** - Conflict resolution refers to the concerted and collective attempts to solve conflicts head-on, and seeks to reconcile divergent interests, *identities and ideologies* of all with the goal of fostering permanent and peaceful solutions via moderation.

### Chairperson Introduction

Dear Delegates,

My name is Tang Kah Wheng, but you can call me Calvin Tang. I am an active Malaysian MUNer for about 4 years now, and I have been to numerous conferences as a delegate and as a Chair. I enjoy doing MUN, and I have greatly benefited from it in terms of self improvement. Seeing my delegates grow and become better people really makes it worthwhile to continue doing MUN for the foreseeable future.

I am currently in Monash University Malaysia, majoring in Economics and Finance. I like to read a lot of books in my free time. I draw, I paint, I build, and I do many other things to keep my creativity levels high. I believe we should all live life like Leonardo da Vinci and do as many things as we can, explore as many things as we can, and love as many things as we can.

If you have any difficulty before or during the conference, you can contact me via email at [tangkah@gmail.com](mailto:tangkah@gmail.com). If you would like to keep contact with me after the conference ends, you can add me on Facebook or LinkedIn. Just let me know by emailing me.

I wish you all the very best for this council and I hope all of you learn something!

Best wishes,

Calvin Tang  
Chairperson of DIYC Regional Council (ASEAN)  
DIYC 2018

## **ASEAN Structure**

The DIYC Regional Council (ASEAN) of DIYC 2018 will function as the **ASEAN Advisory Panel**. Each ASEAN member will be represented by two delegates, and will have different roles to play. The two roles will be the **Minister for Foreign Affairs** and the **Minister for Defence**. When you are given your allocation, please communicate with your assigned partner and decide on the roles which you wish to occupy. Once you have done so, please inform the Chair on the decision. That being said, once you have decided your role, you will research on the topic from the perspective of the role you are occupying. All delegates are to use their own names and not the names of their real life counterparts, e.g. if you are the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Singapore, you will use your name and **not** the name of the real Minister for Foreign Affairs of Singapore, Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan.

As the **ASEAN Advisory Panel**, your role is to represent your country's core interests, and at the same time, understand the core interests of other related parties to any issues debated. Your debates should end with a solution to the issue, and that solution comes in the form of a resolution. Samples of resolutions will be provided at the end of this research report. These resolutions will be passed on to your respective Leaders to be discussed upon and implemented. Hence, professionalism is a **must**.

Delegates are to refer to themselves in **third person** at all times during the entirety of the committee sessions, e.g. "This delegate believes that...". The attire for the entirety of the committee sessions is **Western business attire**. Delegates are to be made aware that there will be a general speaker's list (GSL) of 3 minutes individual speaking time, and a topic-focused speaker's list (TSL) of 2 minutes individual speaking time with a maximum of 20 minutes per topic. The Chair will move into these discussions and delegates will be requested to vote on these topics to discuss on them.

As Chairperson, I will be impartial to all delegates. As such, delegates are **able** to call for points of order if they have valid reason to feel that the Chairperson is unfair to their country. Please note that the Chairperson and the DIYC Team is **not** responsible to help you research, and as you represent your respective countries, please do your research and come prepared. Reading this research report means that you have **understood** the condition, and you are **deemed** to be aware of this condition with its application.

The Chair's email is [tangkah@gmail.com](mailto:tangkah@gmail.com). Please contact the Chair for further assistance in relation to this committee. If you are feeling unready, please contact the Chair, and we will discuss further there.

## **Theme: ASEAN Mechanism to Prevent Conflict in the Region for Peaceful Coexistence**

Conflict Resolution – Conflict resolution refers to the concerted and collective attempts to solve conflicts head-on, and seeks to reconcile divergent interests, identities and ideologies of all with the goal of fostering permanent and peaceful solutions via moderation.

### **A. What is ASEAN?**

- “**ASEAN**” stands for the **Association of Southeast Asian Nations** and it was formed on the **8th of August, 1967**. ASEAN started out with five countries; **Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand**. It was through the efforts of these five countries that led to the creation of ASEAN. The Foreign Ministers (Adam Malik of Indonesia, Narciso R. Ramos of the Philippines, Tun Abdul Razak of Malaysia, S. Rajaratnam of Singapore, and Thanat Khoman of Thailand) met in Bangkok, Thailand to sign the official document which was later known as the “**ASEAN Declaration**”, established ASEAN.
- ASEAN was first established in order to **provide** political, economic, and social security to the region, which was then facing the events of “Konfrontasi”, the Indochina wars, and facing the Communist “domino” threat in their respective countries. The idea behind ASEAN is to ensure that the countries in the region would have a **collective voice** and would be able to **stand together** in times of need. But as the world moved on from the Cold War era and into the digital age, ASEAN began to evolve in terms of focus, and expanded its membership. ASEAN began with five countries in 1967, but with the acceptance of Cambodia into ASEAN in 1999, ASEAN expanded to include 10 countries in the region. A significant milestone would be the adoption of the ASEAN Charter in 2007, which enshrines the core values of ASEAN and sets the requirements for joining ASEAN.
- Building on that foundation, ASEAN has ventured into new areas of cooperation and the latest new venture was the official launch of the **ASEAN Economic Community (AEC)** on the 31st of December 2015. The adoption of the AEC ushers in a new era of economic integration for ASEAN in hopes of providing a stimulus to expand economies in ASEAN. At the same time, act as a deterrent to conflicts as integrated economies are unlikely to go to war with one another as it is unprofitable (Aydin, 2010), a lesson showed best by the European Union (EU).

### **B. Why is ASEAN important?**

- As mentioned before, ASEAN has maintained the relevance of its members by voicing collectively on issues of security, economy, and social mobility on

the world stage. If ASEAN had not existed, Southeast Asia would likely be drastically different, and disputes would eventually sour relations till a point of conflict and chaos.

- ASEAN provides the platform for dialogue for member states, and provides the security with a common framework. ASEAN as well encourages such dialogue via the ASEAN Charter with its three pillars. Through the ASEAN Political-Security Community and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community, ASEAN it is hoped to resolve many thorny issues (Kim, 2011). As seen with the issue of haze, the countries affected; Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore, could come together to discuss on the issue, and then took collective action to prevent the situation from arising again. Besides that, ASEAN sets the tone of non-interference in the internal matters of member states, but member states are allowed provide solutions and opinions. The Rohingya crisis in Myanmar has caused much discontent amongst ASEAN member states as the issue spreads to other member states. Malaysia has been vocal on the issue, but has not interfered with Myanmar's internal affairs. This, in essence is what makes ASEAN important on this front.
- Besides that, ASEAN provides the blueprint for economic integration and growth. ASEAN is a region with a population of over 600 million people, and a combined Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of **US\$ 2.6 trillion**. With the recent launch of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), it is projected that the AEC would stimulate growth in all member states, and accelerate the maturing of economies in the region to shift from labour-intensive manufacturing to a more service-based orientation. The AEC is one of the three pillars of the ASEAN Charter of 2007, and is the only pillar to be progressing forward (Albert, 2017). Within the AEC, there lies the 4 main pillars of importance; the creation of a single market with a free flow of goods, services, labour, and investment, fair economic competition, sustainable and equitable economic development, and lastly, further integration of ASEAN economies to the Global economy. The AEC is still considered as a project run and its results will take time to bear fruit, but it shows that ASEAN now plays an integral role in ensuring all member states move forwards and match up with the rest of the world.

### **C. How does ASEAN function?**

- ASEAN is chaired by a member state for a one year term, and once the term ends, the next member state takes over as chairman of ASEAN. In 2017, the Philippines was the chairman of ASEAN and with the last ASEAN event concluded for 2017, the Philippines passed the chairmanship of ASEAN over to Singapore for 2018. The Chairmanship position is important as they play the role of the mediator between member states in any matters relating to those outlined in the ASEAN Charter of 2007, and they serve as the mediator

between ASEAN and external partners in dialogue sessions, dispute settlements, and ASEAN oriented events.

- The Chairmanship is aided by a Secretariat based in Jakarta, Indonesia. Consensus is important in ASEAN as without it, decisions cannot be made. ASEAN approaches decisions based on consultations and consensus in order to ensure a collective voice in the international stage. In short, having a member state disagree on an issue will be difficult to resolve as there will be differences amongst member states.

#### **D. How does ASEAN prevent inter-state conflict?**

- ASEAN since 1967 has placed certain measures to prevent inter-state conflict. When ASEAN started in 1967, the main tool used was direct dialogue sessions between disputed parties in ASEAN. Due to the shared future and common ground, ASEAN through dialogue sessions have prevented conflicts from breaking out. Two instances of this is when “Konfrontasi” between Indonesia, Malaysia, and to an extent, Singapore, was resolved as mutual understanding began to take form through ASEAN. Second, is when the Philippines laid claim to Sabah, a state which joined Malaysia through a referendum. Direct conflict was prevented between Malaysia and the Philippines.
- As ASEAN accepted more member states, it realized the need to expand its tools to prevent inter-state conflict. In 1993, ASEAN established the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)<sup>1</sup>, a forum where ASEAN leaders came together to lay out any issues and resolve them with opinions voiced by all member states. The ARF was established to continue ensuring peace and prosperity in the region as direct dialogue sessions became increasingly difficult as ASEAN grew larger.
- The ASEAN Charter of 2007 laid out the three pillars of ASEAN which take regional integration to new heights. With deeper integration, direct channels of communication, and consensus decision making, direct conflict is avoidable.

#### **E. ASEAN at 50 and beyond: Will it continue to work?**

- This is really up in the air. Things have become more uncertain as of late, with issues such as the South China Sea giving rise to differing opinions within ASEAN, and without consensus, no firm action can be taken. Moral issues relating to the Rohingya issue has also raised eyebrows by observers of the ASEAN project. At the rate ASEAN is going, it seems conflict will be inevitable as dialogue sessions prove to be just talk and no action.

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<sup>1</sup> Link: <http://aseanregionalforum.asean.org/library/arf-chairmans-statements-and-reports/159.html>

- What can ASEAN do more, seeing as they have pushed for further integration?
- Should they opt for more stern measures to ensure a cohesive voice?
- Should ASEAN strive to achieve the other two pillars of the ASEAN Charter of 2007?

#### **F. DIYC 2018 Topic: How to Prevent Conflict in the Region**

- The main focus for DIYC 2018 is with regards to potential conflicts in the region. As many of you are aware, the issue in the South China Sea has become ever more confusing with some countries in ASEAN backing their own claims, with unclear actions taken against China even after the International Court of Justice ruled in favour of Philippines over their claims in the South China Sea.
- Another issue is with the Rohingya crisis in Myanmar. There are clearly many disagreements in the international community on how the issue is perceived and how little action has been taken. Malaysia has been vocal on the issue, and because of that, there are instances where both countries take jabs at one another.
- But let us assume that these conflicts grew in scale till the point where there is open conflict between nations. Can ASEAN stop it? Can the provisions mentioned above stop it? It is unlikely to stop it, in all honesty. But ASEAN can prepare for such an event by resolving minor conflicts before they grow, and by implementing joint policies to coordinate action amongst ASEAN members. How will they do it? That is where your country steps in.
- Research your country's history of conflicts between ASEAN members pre and post Cold War and see how they resolve them. Understand and learn the process applied, and then see if those lessons can be applied to a grand scale. Research your country's positions on the disputes as of now, such as the South China Sea, the Rohingya Crisis, and border disputes (resource dispute as well). Once the position is clear, understand why those countries act the way they do. If you have done that, you now understand your country's core interests. Now, research briefly on other ASEAN and non-ASEAN members involved in the conflicts listed above, and briefly get a sense of why they act the way they do towards the participants of the conflict. Then, formulate ideas on how compromise can be met, and how further conflicts can be prevented. You have to ask yourself how, what, when, where, and who to prevent these similar conflicts from happening. For example, you can implement an ASEAN mechanism to enhance the joint voice, or you can strengthen ASEAN joint military agreements.

- Once that is done, compress all that information into a position paper. A position paper is **mandatory** for DIYC 2018. Please email the chair for a copy of the position paper if you require it. But a position paper is basically a paper explaining your country's position and your country's ideas to resolve the issue. You have to assume that the reader of your position paper knows nothing on the issue, and your position paper is the only tool for him/her to understand the issue. Be concise and get to the point.

## G. Extra reading

1. ASEAN Political-Security Committee (APSC).  
Link: <http://asean.org/asean-political-security-community/>  
Comments: This link provides you all the necessary documents to read up about the ASEAN Political-Security Committee. It is **highly recommended** that you read up on this for further discussion. Note that this 1st pillar of the ASEAN Charter is rather difficult to understand as there is no clear mention of it by ASEAN leaders as of late, and the results have yet to come into fruition. If you do not understand some parts of it, please contact the Chair for further discussion, and share your thoughts if you can.
2. ASEAN Economic Committee (AEC).  
Link: <http://asean.org/asean-economic-community/>  
Comments: This link provides you all the necessary documents to read up about the ASEAN Economic Committee. It is **highly recommended** that you read up on this for further discussion. Couple this reading with the research paper by Mr. Aydin (2010) in the Bibliography for a better understanding. Since the AEC has officially started in late 2015, you can monitor its progress by checking the Government ministries of each respective member state to see their progress in terms of fulfilling what the AEC's very own pillars strive to achieve.
3. What is ASEAN?  
Link: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/05/what-is-asean-explainer/>  
Comments: If you do not understand what was written in this research report, fret not. This link provides you a better visualisation on ASEAN and its purpose. It is **highly recommended** that you pay this site a visit if you are not sure on what to do first. Once you have understood the basics, please read up on the other recommendations.
4. ASEAN Conception and Evolution by Thanat Khoman.  
Link: [http://asean.org/?static\\_post=asean-conception-and-evolution-by-thanat-khoman](http://asean.org/?static_post=asean-conception-and-evolution-by-thanat-khoman)  
Comments: This link provides some insight into what a distinguished Thai diplomat and politician thinks of ASEAN, and the explanation provided is something worth exploring with further debate. It is **optional** for you to read

this piece, but it will definitely give you a better understanding if you do.

5. ASEAN The Way Ahead by S. Rajaratnam  
Link: [http://asean.org/?static\\_post=asean-the-way-ahead-by-s-rajaratnam](http://asean.org/?static_post=asean-the-way-ahead-by-s-rajaratnam)  
Comments: This link provides some explanation on what ASEAN stands for and how ASEAN deters any conflict before it becomes a large scale war. It was written by a distinguished Singaporean diplomat and politician, a person I look up to. Again, it is **optional** for you to read this piece, but additional information should always be welcomed.
6. Sample Resolutions by ASEAN.  
Link: <http://aseanhrmech.org/statements/index.html>  
Link: [http://environment.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/ADOPTED-Bangkok\\_Resolution\\_12AMME-26Sep.pdf](http://environment.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/ADOPTED-Bangkok_Resolution_12AMME-26Sep.pdf)

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#### H. Bibliography

1. Albert, E. (2017). *ASEAN: The Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Council on Foreign Relations*. Retrieved 27th November 2017, from <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/asean-association-southeast-asian-nations>
2. Aydin, A. (2010). The deterrent effects of economic integration. *Journal of Peace Research*, 47(5), 523-533. Retrieved 27th November 2017, from <http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.monash.edu.au/stable/20798923>
3. Kim, M. (2011). Theorizing ASEAN Integration. *Asian Perspective*, 35(3), 407-435. Retrieved 27th November 2017, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42704763>