The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established on 8 August 1967 with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration by Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. The ASEAN Declaration committed the signatory States to cooperate for the purpose of economic growth, social progress, cultural development, and regional peace and stability.

Aims and Purposes
The ASEAN Declaration states that the aims and purposes of the Association are, among others, to:

- Accelerate the economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region through joint endeavours in the spirit of equality and partnership in order to strengthen the foundation for a prosperous and peaceful community of Southeast Asian Nations.
- Promote regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice and the rule of law in the relationship among countries of the region and adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter.

Structure
The highest decision-making body of ASEAN is the meeting of the Heads of Government/State of the Member States – the ASEAN Summit. The Chairmanship of ASEAN is rotated annually, based on the alphabetical order of the English names of Member States.

ASEAN has numerous sectoral ministerial bodies which cooperate in many fields, including defence, law, transnational crime, human right, trade, investment, finance, agriculture and forestry, energy, minerals, science and technology, transport, telecommunications and information technology, tourism, information, culture and arts, education, disaster management, environment, human pollution, health, labour, rural development and poverty eradication, youth, women and children, and sports.

The ASEAN Community 2015

The Association represents the collective will of the nations of South-East Asia to bind themselves together in friendship and cooperation and, through joint efforts and sacrifices, secure for their peoples and for posterity the blessings of peace, freedom and prosperity.

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The ASEAN Way
Raise our flag high, sky high
Embrace the pride in our heart
ASEAN we are bonded as one
Lookin' out to the world
For peace, our goal from the very start
And prosperity to last
We dare to dream we can share
Together for ASEAN
We dare to dream we can share
For it's the way of ASEAN

The ASEAN Anthem

"United by a common desire and collective will to live in a region of lasting peace, security and stability, sustained economic growth, shared prosperity and social progress, and to promote our vital interests, ideals and aspirations."

The ASEAN Declaration (8 August 1967)

The ASEAN Charter (30 November 2007)
LANDMARK DOCUMENTS

1967 ASEAN Declaration
1971 Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality Declaration
1976 - Declaration of ASEAN Concord - Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia
1989 Agreement on the Common Effective Preferential Tariff Scheme for the ASEAN Free Trade Area
1995 Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone
1997 ASEAN Vision 2020
2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea
2003 Declaration of ASEAN Concord II
2007 Charter of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations
2009 Cha-am Hua Hin Declaration on the Roadmap for the ASEAN Community (2009-2015)
2011 Bali Declaration on ASEAN Community in A Global Nation: “Bali Concord II”

TOWARDS AN ASEAN COMMUNITY BY 2015

ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC)

The APSC aims to ensure that the peoples and Member States of ASEAN live in peace with one another and with the world at large in a just, democratic and harmonious environment.

To achieve this, the APSC promotes political development in accordance with the principles of democracy, the rule of law and good governance, respect for, promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, as inscribed in the ASEAN Charter. It also subscribes to a comprehensive approach to security. At the same time, the APSC seeks to strengthen the mutually beneficial relations between ASEAN and its Dialogue Partners and Friends.

ASEAN Economic Community (AEC)

ASEAN’s cooperation and regional economic integration are part of the Member States’ efforts to stimulate economic growth, increase jobs and reduce poverty.

The AEC aims to transform ASEAN into a stable, prosperous and highly competitive region with equitable economic development, and reduced poverty and socio-economic disparities.

Specifically, it comprises four key pillars: (1) a single market and production base; (2) a highly competitive economic region; (3) a region of equitable economic development; and (4) a region fully integrated into the global economy.

To realise the AEC, the ASEAN Leaders adopted the AEC Blueprint at the 13th ASEAN Summit in 2007. The Blueprint serves as a master plan towards achieving an AEC by 2015 by identifying economic integration measures and targets and timelines for their implementation. To ensure that the targets can be achieved by 2015, a scoreboard system to track progress and an AEC communications plan to engage all stakeholders have been put in place.

The AEC is an achievable goal that requires political commitment, engagement of all stakeholders, and robust monitoring and implementation systems.

ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC)

The ASCC aims to contribute to realising an ASEAN Community that is people-oriented and socially responsible with a view to achieving enduring solidarity and unity among the peoples and Member States of ASEAN. It seeks to forge a common identity and build a caring and sharing society which is inclusive and where the well-being, livelihood and welfare of the peoples are enhanced.

To achieve this, the ASCC will implement cooperation activities that are people-oriented and environmentally friendly and geared towards the promotion of sustainable development. It will also contribute to building a strong foundation for greater understanding, good neighbourhood and a shared sense of responsibility.

The ASCC envisages the following characteristics:
(a) human development; (b) social welfare and protection; (c) social justice and rights; (d) ensuring environmental sustainability; (e) building the ASEAN identity; and (f) narrowing the development gap.

The ASCC Blueprint was adopted by the ASEAN Leaders at the 14th ASEAN Summit in 2009. In the ASCC, people are truly at the centre-stage of ASEAN community building efforts.