

Bogor Statement of ASEAN Trade Unions Unity Towards ASEAN Regional Economic Integration

We, the representatives of Global Union Federation (GUF) affiliates and trade unions, gathered in Bogor, Indonesia on 9-11 February 2009, to convene a regional workshop on Trade Unions and the ASEAN Regional Economic Integration. On this historical occasion, we recognize that as trade unionists, workers and citizens of ASEAN, we have a responsibility to contribute to the building of a caring and sharing ASEAN community. We are committed to work together to build a people-centred ASEAN with trade unions' participation.

We believe that the process of regional economic integration being undertaken by ASEAN has the potential to provide ASEAN member countries with competitive advantages in this age of globalization by spurring economic growth, providing greater job opportunities and promoting overall socio-economic development in the region. Our unions have significant expertise and knowledge which we are prepared to commit to this process. However, we are seriously concerned that this laudable goal is being undermined by a lack of attention and understanding of the critical importance of social protection, social justice, and international core labour standards that must accompany this rapid economic integration.

Indeed, the greatest challenge facing us in ASEAN is to put the interests and well-being of the working people in the ten ASEAN countries at the top of the regional integration agenda. We want closer linkages between and among the ten ASEAN countries. However, we also want the integration process to be not only inclusive but also truly beneficial and equitable for those who constitute the majority of ASEAN society.

Towards this end, ASEAN trade unions have been active in engaging ASEAN on the economic and social dimensions of the various regional and industrial liberalization programs. In particular, we have been pushing for an integration process that respects the universal core labour standards and therefore leads to genuine social and economic cohesion among the peoples of ASEAN.

After intensive deliberation over these past three days, we, the ASEAN trade unions, have given our commitment to the following plan of action to contribute constructively and collectively to the ASEAN integration process.

1. To better understand the impact that the ASEAN regional economic integration will have on the approximately 263 million working people in the region, the trade unions and GUF affiliates will undertake a series of comprehensive studies of the impact of economic integration on economic sectors where our members are employed. These studies will focus on the impacts on the workers in the various sectors in ASEAN in relation to:
 - Development of the sector in terms of evolution of the industries, ownership and their operations;
 - Employment trends and practices, particularly regarding job opportunities, types of employment, and terms and conditions of employment;
 - Skill requirements and training needs;

- Best practices in industrial relations and labour management relations; and
 - Trade unions status, situation, and existing partnerships.
2. To help ASEAN workers fully appreciate and understand the ASEAN regional integration process, trade unions in ASEAN will disseminate comprehensive, understandable and accessible information in their national languages to our members regarding ASEAN. We are committed to prepare trade union leaders and members for meaningful and constructive dialogue with employers and governments at the national and ASEAN levels. Such a social dialogue will help ASEAN industries to enjoy sustainable growth while ensuring workers have decent jobs.
 3. Trade unions are ready to engage and support the efforts of ASEAN regional integration by offering constructive and timely inputs to help in the development of the respective industries. Trade unions will offer these constructive suggestions and feedback to the ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ASEAN-BAC) and to ASEAN Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ASEAN-CCI) as well as other employers and employers' associations. These suggestions will focus on ways to improve the performance of the industry which can directly help in promoting employees' productivity, ensure sustainable corporate growth, and enhance the terms and conditions of the workers.
 4. Trade unions are committed to work in partnership with ASEAN-BAC, ASEAN-CCI, and regional and national employer federations to develop harmonious labour management relationships based on the concept of social partnership in industrial relations that promote and protect the rights of workers.
 5. Trade unions in ASEAN are also deeply concerned about labour migration because migrant workers in the region are employed in all economic sectors.¹ A number of our unions are members of Task Force on ASEAN Migrant Workers (TF-AMW) and have actively participated in TF-AMW national and regional consultations, in collaboration with NGOs, mass organizations, and Government representatives. These consultations aim to develop a civil society draft of a comprehensive Instrument on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers that will be presented to ASEAN later in 2009. We strongly believe that ASEAN must have a rights-based approach to labour migration that offers real protections, in line with international labour standards, for all migrant workers in the region.
 6. We sincerely hope that the ASEAN governments will support these initiatives by opening the door to trade unions and ensuring our equal right to participation in ASEAN forums, comparable to the opportunities currently afforded to employer organizations. In line with ASEAN Charter and the vision of "One Caring and Sharing Community" we believe that it is vital that there be a systematic effort to facilitate and enable trade unions' participation in the ASEAN processes, thereby encouraging trade unions and employers to work in partnership at sectoral, national and ASEAN levels.

We support the initiative to establish the ASEAN Service Employees Trade Union Council (ASETUC) as the coordinating body to facilitate cooperation among ASEAN-based trade unions in their engagement with ASEAN bodies.

¹ These sectors include, but are not limited to, construction, distribution, domestic work, entertainment, finance, forestry and plantations, health care, graphical services, manufacturing, mining and mineral extraction, professional services, security and maintenance services, telecommunications, tourism/hospitality, and air, land and sea transport.

Building a people-centred ASEAN requires the whole-hearted participation of all sectors of ASEAN civil society. A trade unionists, we commit ourselves to promoting deeper and closer unity among the trade unions and civil society organizations in the region. We will continue to systematically engage with ASEAN-based community based organizations, NGOs, academics and environmentalists to ensure that a unified agenda is developed to support full consideration by ASEAN of concerns related to migration, human and trade union rights, decent work, food security and environment as the ASEAN integration agenda moves forward.

We recognize that our success in achieving a vision of ASEAN with the concerns of workers and their families at its core will require greater unity among trade unionists behind this vision. To build this unity, we are committed to undertaking a comprehensive program of education, awareness building, and technical training for our members and social partners on all aspects of ASEAN and its regional economic integration plans.

We sincerely thank the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) for their support for our workshop and look forward to their continuing collaboration in our efforts to achieve a people-centred ASEAN.

We, the representatives of the workers of ASEAN, recognize that it is our members who will face the most direct impacts from ASEAN's regional economic integration. We are strongly committed to engaging with all ASEAN social partners and Governments to ensure that our voice is heard, and all workers are treated with justice and dignity!

Adopted in Cisarua, Bogor, Indonesia, February 11, 2009.