



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Volume 6/Issue 6 - June 2020 Bumper
Edition

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EU and ASEAN: Partners for the Long Haul - Op-ed by Ambassador Igor Driesmans, Head of EU Mission to ASEAN



Like so many, I had pictured this year differently. I took up office as EU Ambassador to ASEAN in September 2019 and my team and I had worked out an ambitious calendar for 2020 with numerous events and meetings to take our partnership with ASEAN to the next level. Then, slowly it became clear that the Coronavirus was not an ordinary flu. It also became apparent that the virus would become a top priority for many months, overriding the calendar we had so carefully crafted.

There was no roadmap on how to deal with pandemics like these. For Europeans, the last major pandemic – the Spanish Flu – dates back more than a century ago. Many ASEAN countries remembered the SARS outbreak in 2002 - and drew some good lessons - but the scale and speed of COVID-19 was markedly different.

Mistakes were made in those early days. Many underestimated the power of the virus and the damage it could do – not just to people's health but to the society and economy as a whole. That also happened in the European Union. But Europeans pulled themselves together. Through the EU, European countries showed their solidarity with the hardest hit regions; an immense stimulus package to absorb the COVID socio-economic shock was adopted; research programmes were launched; tens of thousands of European citizens were repatriated; protective equipment purchased jointly and stockpiled.

International cooperation was at the heart of this European response. Instead of looking inwards, Europe looked outwards, as we realised that no one would be safe until the entire world was safe.

ASEAN proved an important partner in our quest for a global, coordinated response to the Coronacrisis. Like the EU, ASEAN came together to find regional solutions to address the crisis. Mid-April, ASEAN leaders decided to cooperate on health and research, provide consular assistance, maintain supply chains and stimulate the recovery.

For the EU, ASEAN was therefore, once again, a natural partner. The EU was the second partner of ASEAN to hold on 20 March a dedicated EU-ASEAN Special Foreign Ministers' Meeting on COVID-19, calling for more collaboration in addressing the crisis. And we didn't stop at mere statements of intent.

Firstly, in a collective "Team Europe" approach, the EU mobilised very quickly over EUR 350 million in grants to support health systems and economic recovery in ASEAN, while EU Member States and European development banks provide soft loans to support ASEAN's state budgets. And much more funding is still being allocated.

Secondly, the EU offered ASEAN research organisations to team up with EU scientific projects on COVID-19. Eighteen new EU-funded research and innovation projects on the Coronavirus, such as on protective equipment, modelling of the spread of the virus and rapid diagnostics techniques, were opened for cooperation with ASEAN scientific organisations. As that collaboration progresses we hope that EU-ASEAN scientific cooperation can bring results for all.

Thirdly, as we often share similar challenges, the EU and ASEAN exchanged valuable information and experience in dealing with this crisis. For example on how and when to open internal borders, or how to ensure vaccine security globally.

Fourthly, we work with ASEAN to ensure that supply chains are maintained and the economy benefits from a coordinated recovery. We all need to reboot our economies and the more we more we can do this in a coordinated way, the more effective we will be. Economic coordination is all the more important if one recalls that the EU private sector holds a quarter of the total FDI stock in the region, and that the EU remains ASEAN's second largest trading partner.

We will also continue on our path to negotiate free trade and investment agreements with a number of ASEAN countries, as building blocks for an ambitious region-to-region trade and investment framework. In

June, the Vietnamese National Assembly ratified the FTA, clearing the path for the entry into force of the agreement. The FTA - after Singapore the second with an ASEAN country - provides for the almost complete (99%) elimination of customs duties between the EU and Vietnam, and will reduce many of the existing non-tariff barriers to trade. We are also working hard to increase transport links and our overall connectivity. I hope we soon agree the first ever region-to-region Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement.

Tomorrow's economic growth should address this other major emergency of our times: climate change. The green agenda is a top priority for the EU and for our partnership with ASEAN, now and in the future. While in Europe, we are rolling out the EU Green Deal for a circular, carbon-neutral economy by 2050, we know that climate action can only be successful if all major global players work together. The EU sees ASEAN as an indispensable partner in this regard, and we hope to step up cooperation on a strategic green agenda in the months to come.

The Coronacrisis has shaken up all of our plans for this year. But it has shown how important international cooperation is, and how relevant the deep, comprehensive and reliable the 43-years old EU-ASEAN partnership is to address global challenges such as COVID-19. Let us build on that to seize new opportunities and support the fundamental transition to a green future the world needs.



EU-ABC'S 7TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (FOR MEMBERS ONLY)

The EU-ASEAN Business Council's Annual General Meeting will be taking place on **Monday, 20 July at 4pm**.

Taking into account the COVID-19 situation, the AGM will be via video conference and is strictly for members only.

Click [here](#) to register for the AGM (*for members only*)

EU-ABC WEBINARS & ACTIVITIES

EU-ASEAN Business Council Interview Series

EU-ASEAN Business Council
Interview Series

Johan de Villiers

Managing Director
ABB Singapore



The EU-ASEAN Business Council is proud to share the launch of our very own ***Interview Series*** on 16 June. In the format of 3 minute, 3 question video interviews, it features our members providing insights on trending topics and various subject matters.

Featured on the first edition of the series is Johan de Villiers, Managing Director of [ABB Singapore](#) and Treasurer of EU-ABC, who gave an excellent interview, sharing his views about the Impact of COVID-19 on sustainable infrastructure landscape, how industrial and manufacturing sectors are affected and emerging trends for the sectors. Johan also provided insight on what ASEAN leaders must do to emerge from the pandemic stronger.

To view the interview, click [here](#)

EU-ASEAN Business Council
Interview Series

Sharon Ooi

Managing Director and Head of
Property & Casualty (P&C)
Underwriting, Asia Pacific
Swiss Re

EU-ASEAN Business Council
Interview Series

Martin Hayes

President
Bosch Southeast Asia
Vice Chairman
EU-ASEAN Business Council

Up next in the series, the team will be bringing you interviews with:

- **Sharon Ooi**

Managing Director and Head of Property & Casualty (P&C) Underwriting, Asia Pacific

[Swiss Re](#)

- **Martin Hayes**

President, [Bosch Southeast Asia](#)
Vice Chairman, [EU-ASEAN Business Council](#)

The interviews will be out on Tuesday 30 June and Thursday 2 July respectively, keep a lookout for them!

The team at EU-ABC would also like to invite members who are interested to be featured in the **Interview Series** to reach out to us at info@eu-asean.eu

EU-ABC's Business Sentiment Survey



The EU-ASEAN Business Council launched our Business Sentiment Survey on 26 May. On its 6th run, the annual flagship publication serves as a barometer for current European business sentiment in the ASEAN region, with a focus on key issues such as customs & trade regulations, regional and global developments, COVID-19 responses, and other challenges to European Businesses in ASEAN, amidst an increasingly challenging global trade environment, compounded by the pandemic. It is distributed to, and read by, policymakers and key stakeholders right across the ASEAN region and in Europe.

If you are an Executive in a European firm with a presence in ASEAN, do share with us your outlook and concerns for the region in 2020 and beyond. Results will be compiled and published in September later this year.

Don't miss out on this chance to have your voice heard by government leaders and public policy makers -- respondents will receive preliminary findings of the survey results directly in their inboxes!

Participate in the survey now by clicking [here](#)

Op-ed on Post Pandemic Economic Recovery

Working together to come out stronger, more integrated, better able to respond to challenges

By Donald Kanak

WE live in extraordinary times. We have seen a health emergency become a global economic emergency, creating unprecedented stress on families, companies and communities. We should count ourselves lucky, however, to live in a region that holds so much promise, energy and fortitude.

Despite the ongoing pandemic emergency, Asean is, I believe, well placed to emerge stronger, and better equipped to seize the opportunities of the future if the 10 member states work together to take clear and decisive steps.

The EU-Asean Business Council, the European business body for South-east Asia that I chair, and the Asean Business Advisory Council (Asean-BAC) recently issued a joint statement calling for such an approach.

The joint statement also called for a high-level Special Commission tasked by the Asean leaders to recommend a recovery plan. That plan that would improve the response to the current and future pandemics and ensure that Asean comes out stronger, more integrated and better able to respond to global challenges and opportunities. That commission would seek input from various stakeholders including a special business ad-



Designing and building quality infrastructure, and financing and insuring it, are areas of expertise where European industry can help create jobs in the short term and provide a foundation for sustained growth that will benefit Asean and its citizens. PHOTO: AFP

8 June 2020: The Business Times published an op-ed by Don Kanak, Chairman of the EU-ASEAN Business Council; Chairman, Eastspring Investments. The piece discusses on how cohesiveness will be vital for ASEAN's post pandemic economic recovery.

Click [here](#) for the full version of the op-ed

3 part webinar series to Unlocking Asean's Sustainability Agenda- What Can Businesses Do?: Understanding Europe's Green Deal & Implications On ASEAN Business



The EU-ASEAN Business Council concluded our 3 part Sustainability Webinar Series with "Understanding Europe's Green Deal & Implications On ASEAN Business" on 24 June.

The well received webinar, brought to you together with [European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines](#), provided attendees with useful information and a deeper understanding on the mechanics of Europe Green Deal. The outstanding panel of speakers also shared their insights on the Green Deal's implications to ASEAN businesses, valuable information to all who attended.

Panelists:

- **Jacob Werksman**

Principal Advisor, Directorate General for Climate Action
[European Commission](#)

- **Kathy Roussel**

Policy and Government Affairs Manager, [amfori](#)

- **Dr Deborah Elms**

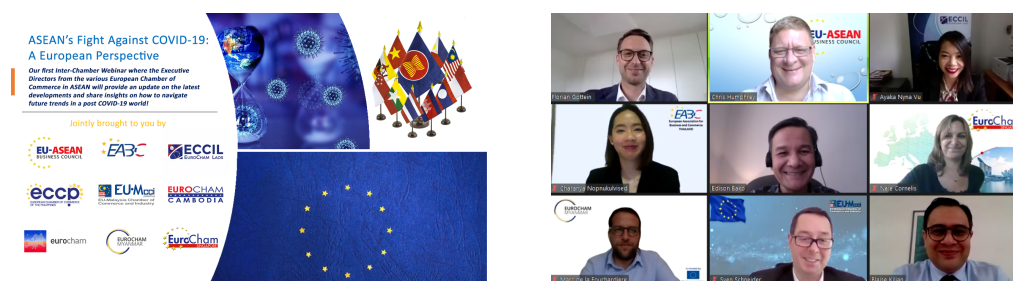
Founder and Executive Director, [Asian Trade Centre](#)

Moderator:

- **Noel Clehane**

Global Head of Regulatory & Public Policy, [BDO](#)

Inter-Chamber Webinar - ASEAN's Fight Against COVID-19: A European Perspective



The EU-ASEAN Business Council, working closely together with the various European Chamber of Commerce in ASEAN, held our first Inter-Chamber webinar, "**ASEAN's Fight Against COVID-19: A European Perspective**" on 11 June. Featuring Executive Directors from the various chambers, the well received webinar saw an attendance of over 350 people.

The outstanding webinar provided attendees not only with updates on the latest developments of the chambers' respective markets and valuable insights on how to navigate future trends in a post COVID-19 world but also the opportunity to engage and interact with the exceptional panel of speakers.

The EU-ABC is proud to be a part of this excellent collaborative effort between the various chambers, bringing to the audience content that covers and addresses an issue that is prevalent at the moment.

Panelists:

- **Blaise Kilian**

Executive Director, [European Chamber Of Commerce, Cambodia](#)

- **Edison Bako**

Executive Director, [European Business Chambers of Commerce \(EuroCham\) Indonesia](#)

- **Ayaka Nyna**

Executive Director, [European Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Laos](#)

- **Sven Schneider**

CEO, [EU-Malaysia Chamber Of Commerce & Industry \(EUMCCI\)](#)

- **Marc De La Fouchardiere**

Executive Director, [Eurocham Myanmar](#)

- **Florian Gottein**

Executive Director, [European Chamber Of Commerce Of The Philippines](#)

- **Nele Cornelis**

Executive Director, [European Chamber Of Commerce \(Singapore\)](#)

- **Charanya Nopnukulvised**

Operations Director, [European Association For Business And Commerce \(Thailand\)](#)

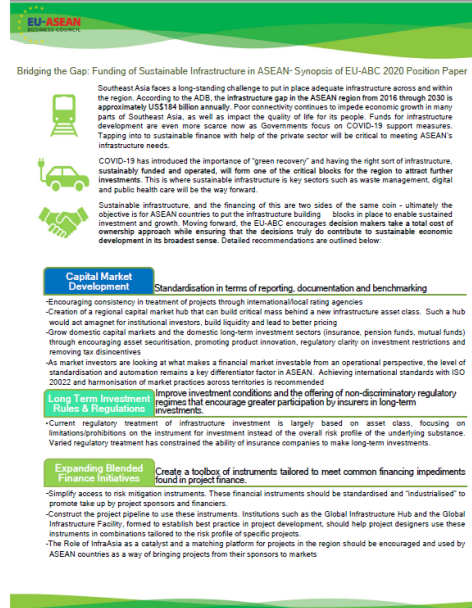
Moderator:

- **Chris Humphrey**

Executive Director, [EU ASEAN Business Council](#)

For more information on the webinar, click [here](#)
To view the webinar, click [here](#)

Publication of "**Bridging the Gap: Funding of Sustainable Infrastructure in ASEAN**" Paper



The EU-ASEAN Business Council, in support of Vietnam's Chairmanship Theme of a Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN, published the **"Bridging the Gap: Funding of Sustainable Infrastructure in ASEAN"** paper on 9 June 2020.

The paper outlines recommendations on how ASEAN leaders can better support infrastructure development in their respective countries. With public funds usually insufficient to meet infrastructure demands, the key recommendations put forward by the EU-ASEAN Business Council focus on creating a favourable environment that boosts private sector participation and meets UN Sustainable Development Guidelines.

• **Recommendations include standardisation of reporting, improving investment conditions and regulations, and creating financial instruments tailored to overcome common financing impediments**

• **Sustainable infrastructure in sectors such as waste management, digital and public health care is expected to be a key determinant for the region to attract investment and contribute to post-COVID recovery**

• **Decision makers are advised to take a total cost of ownership approach while ensuring that their decisions contribute to sustainable economic development**

For more information, click [here](#)

To access the paper and full listing of our publications, click [here](#)

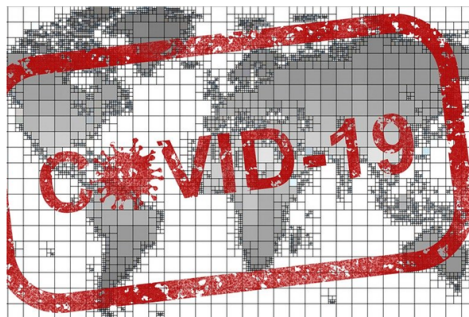
Press articles released:

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/06/10/business-council-ppp-a-viable-option-for-infrastructure-buildup-during-crisis/>

<https://www.theasset.com/article/40752/why-blended-finance-can-narrow-the-asean-infrastructure-gap>

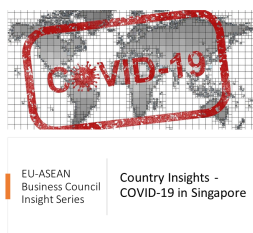
<https://www.philstar.com/business/2020/06/11/2020022/greater-private-sector-participation-infrastructure-urged>

Weekly Insight Series



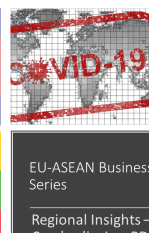
EU-ASEAN
Business Council
Insight Series

Country Insights - COVID-19 in Philippines



EU-ASEAN
Business Council
Insight Series

Country Insights -
COVID-19 in Singapore



EU-ASEAN Business Council Insight
Series

Regional Insights – COVID-19 in
Cambodia, Lao PDR & Myanmar

The EU-ASEAN Business Council's **Weekly Insight Series** for the month of June :

- 5 June 2020: [Country Insights - COVID-19 in Philippines](#)
- 15 June 2020: [Country Insights - COVID-19 in Singapore](#)
- 24 June 2020: [Regional Insights - COVID-19 in Cambodia, Lao PDR & Myanmar](#)

Do keep a lookout for more insight pieces in the pipeline, coming your way!

IN THE NEWS

Press articles, opinion pieces and media clips released:

<https://www.businesstimes.com.sg/asean-business/cohesiveness-will-be-vital-for-asean%E2%80%99s-post-pandemic-economic-recovery>

<https://www.theedgemarkets.com/article/special-commission-proposed-jointly-address-covid19-measures-asean>

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/06/10/business-council-ppp-a-viable-option-for-infrastructure-buildup-during-crisis/>

https://14b6ea15-d0b2-4a66-9bfb-e8396fd5ddf4.filesusr.com/ugd/63371b_855de912415e42ebbe2df10f553271a9.pdf

<https://www.theasset.com/article/40752/why-blended-finance-can-narrow-the-asean-infrastructure-gap>

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2020/06/11/2020022/greater-private-sector-participation-infrastructure-urged>

<https://www.thejakartapost.com/paper/2020/06/25/cohesiveness-vital-for-aseans-post-covid-19-economic-recovery.html>

For full listing of media coverage, please click [here](#)

EU-ABC UPCOMING WEBINARS & ACTIVITIES



EU-ASEAN Business Council
Presents

Future of Travel & Tourism in ASEAN Post Pandemic



Date: 17 July 2020

Time: 15.00 - 16.00 (SGT)

Panelists:

- **Arturo P. Boncato**

Undersecretary for Tourism Regulation, Coordination, and Resource Generation
[Department of Tourism, Philippines](#)

- **Angel Llull Mancas**

Vice President & Managing Director APAC, [Booking.com](#)

- **Shasha Ridzam**

Group Head of Global Affairs & Sustainability, [Air Asia](#)

To register, click [here](#)

More details to follow, stay tuned!

Keep a lookout for our Illicit Trade webinar and other exciting webinars we have in the pipeline for you.

PARTNER EVENTS



To counter the economic impact from the lockdowns imposed to control COVID-19, ASEAN member countries have implemented a series of relief measures aimed at sustaining their economies. While these measures are implemented at the national level, ASEAN has also moved towards regional coordination.

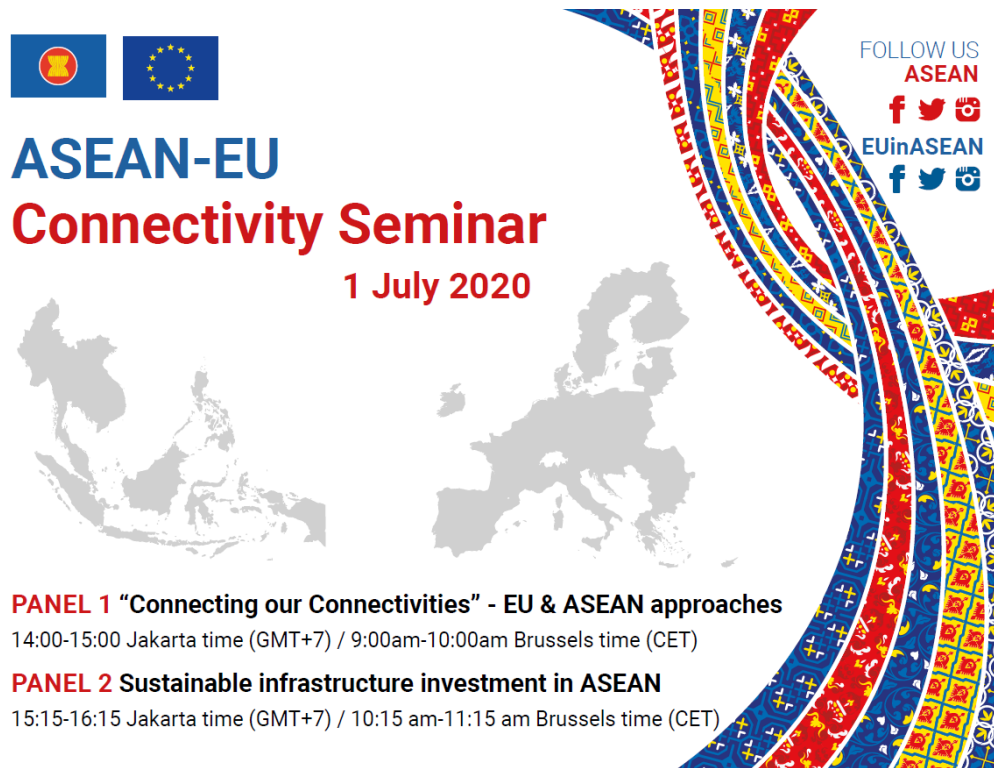
In March, ASEAN Economic Ministers issued a joint statement that called for collective action to mitigate the impact of the coronavirus and in April, ASEAN leaders called for a post-pandemic recovery plan and proposed the establishment of a COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund.

Join CIMB ASEAN Research Institute (CARI) as Tan Sri Dr. Munir Majid (Chairman of CARI) speaks to ASEAN Secretary-General, H.E. Dato Paduka Lim Jock Hoi on the current progress of

ASEAN's COVID-19 related plans for the region and how the regional bloc intends to achieve its vision of an integrated economy in the new normal.

For more details/to register click [here](#)

If you have any questions, please contact Ms Christine Wood at wood@cariasean.org



The poster features the ASEAN and EU flags at the top left. The title 'ASEAN-EU Connectivity Seminar' is in large blue and red font, with the date '1 July 2020' below it. A stylized map of Southeast Asia and Europe is shown in the background. On the right, there is a decorative graphic of colorful, flowing lines. Social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are present, along with the text 'FOLLOW US ASEAN' and 'EUinASEAN'. The panel details are listed at the bottom.

**ASEAN-EU
Connectivity Seminar**
1 July 2020

PANEL 1 "Connecting our Connectivities" - EU & ASEAN approaches
14:00-15:00 Jakarta time (GMT+7) / 9:00am-10:00am Brussels time (CET)

PANEL 2 Sustainable infrastructure investment in ASEAN
15:15-16:15 Jakarta time (GMT+7) / 10:15 am-11:15 am Brussels time (CET)

Connectivity is a key driver for growth, jobs, competitiveness, and trade, and both the EU & ASEAN have their respective visions of it. Both organisations work to promote the movement of people, goods, services and capital between Europe and Asia, making them natural partners in connectivity. This seminar will showcase the EU-ASEAN cooperation, identify potential synergies between respective strategies, and strengthen efforts to "connect connectivities"

For more details, click [here](#)

To register: <https://tmabevents.be/Transtec/Transtec2020.php>

Contact MISSION-ASEAN@eeas.europa.eu should you have any questions.

EU-ABC MEMBERS



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