

Notes from the ED (July 2022)



We have been working hard behind the scenes in preparation for our many upcoming events and mission trips and, without realising it, July came and went in a flash!

Business as Usual

This month the ASEAN Secretariat approached the Council for private sector perspectives on the region-wide implementation plan for the ASEAN Circular Economy Framework. We are heartened that the Secretariat is taking our suggestions seriously to bring this agenda forward.

Our idea that measures be included in the upgrading of the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA) to help accelerate the development of the Circular Economy was specifically mentioned by the ASEAN DSG at an event this week.

The Council's Insurance Group also held a workshop with OJK, Kominfo and Ministry of Health officials from Indonesia, continuing our work advocating for the importance of digital innovation for financial inclusion, consumer protection and promoting use of digital health tools across ASEAN.

This week, I also participated in a series of webinars. In the first, organised by ASEAN-BAC, I shared about the need to strengthen supply chain resilience through ASEAN Connectivity; to do more to accelerate customs automation; and, the need to green supply chains. The Council also held its own webinar on road safety, discussing the importance of making Anti-lock Braking Systems (ABS) mandatory on two-wheelers. Work still needs to be done on this front to ensure regulation on a regional scale, but we were encouraged that the sharing reaffirmed the need for ABS to save lives. It is no longer a question of *should* ABS be mandatory, but **when**. If you missed the webinar, you can view the recording **here**.

We also took part in a series of roundtables on the development of Phase II of the ASEAN Taxonomy on Sustainable Finance, a vital tool for the region to have in order to support the funding of infrastructure and other projects going forward.



Finally, I was delighted to take part in an online debate organised by the European Chamber of Commerce in the Philippines on the importance of RCEP to the economy there, and the broader region.

Members-Only Activities

The Council once again participated in the ASEAN Trade Facilitation Joint Consultative Meeting in July. We also held our monthly members-only briefing with Bower Group Asia, turning the lens this time to Indonesia and peered deeper into the current political and economic outlook of the archipelagic nation. Furthermore, our newly formed Taxation Advocacy Group held its first meeting, focussing on the issue of BEPS and its implementation across ASEAN.

What's in store in August?

The Council will be hosting two events in Indonesia this month. On 11th August 2022, we will be organising a one-day event on ***The Future of Mobility: Optimising Customer Experience through Location Intelligence***. Participants who are interested to join us can register for the physical event **here**.

We will visit Indonesia once again from 29th August to 1st September 2022 for our **second** mission trip for 2022! For those who still wish to join us, online registration has, unfortunately closed. But, fret not, feel free to reach out to **me** to indicate your interest and my wonderful team will register you for the mission trip.

In addition to the mission trip to Indonesia, usual day-to-day work at the Council powers on. Our members-only briefing with Bower Group Asia will bring us to Malaysia on 17th August. We also look forward to publishing the long-awaited ***Transforming Diagnostic Access: A Roadmap for ASEAN***, highlighting the importance of diagnostics in the patient pathway. In conjunction with the paper, the Council will be hosting a series of webinars to underscore the value of diagnostics. The first of the series will be the launch webinar, to be held on 25th August, covering the current state-of-play of diagnostics across ASEAN. Register for the webinar **here**.

Looking further ahead....

We have even more things lined up for the last third of the year. On the publication side of life, you can expect papers from us on the upgrading of ATIGA; combatting non-communicable diseases; Agri-food and sustainability; and the next iteration of our annual Business Sentiment Survey.



Mission Trips to Vietnam (last week of September) and to Thailand (last week of November) are being worked on, and we expect to be presenting to both ASEAN Economic Ministers and ASEAN Energy Ministers in September too.

The biggest thing on our horizon though is a couple of major events in Brussels in December alongside the ASEAN-EU Commemorative Summit. More information on this will be released soon, so watch this space!

On a final note, August is a special month for ASEAN. Not only do we welcome a number of celebrations: National Day of Singapore, Independence Day of Indonesia, as well as National Day of Malaysia. Most importantly we commemorate ASEAN day on 8th August to kick-start the month of celebrations. The Council wishes to echo the spirit of independence and unity of ASEAN this August. Onwards & upwards, *Majulah!*