

**Concept Paper**  
**Seminar on Promoting Economic Empowerment of Women in ASEAN**  
**(As part of Developing Regional Catalysts on Women's Economic Empowerment**  
**between ASEAN and UN Women)**  
**Friday 22 September 2017, 12.00 – 13.00 hours**  
**Conference Room 11, UN Headquarter, New York**

**Overview**

In September 2015, Member States of the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development during the United Nations General Assembly, which aims to create a more sustainable and equitable planet for generations to come. The ASEAN Community Vision 2025 was adopted at the 27<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in 2015. The principles underpinning the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are similar as both champion the greater involvement of people and peoples from all sectors in shaping the development process, making sure that “no one is left behind.” This means that everyone in society, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, and religion, has a say in what kind of society they want to live in.

This resonates clearly within the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which recognizes that “the achievement of full human potential and of sustainable development is not possible if one half of humanity continues to be denied its full rights and opportunities.”<sup>1</sup> Among its 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets, Goal 5 seeks to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.<sup>2</sup> Gender equality is a goal in and of itself but there is also a strong interdependence between this and other goals to achieve human development.

Therefore, collaboration between ASEAN Member States, the ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) would become a useful platform in generating discussion about greater economic empowerment of women in various aspects including tapping into high-skill sectors and the private sectors. The involvement of successful women entrepreneurs in ASEAN could also be role models/figures to share their best practices to further empower women and girls everywhere.

**Objectives**

1. To identify priorities and projects between ASEAN and UN Women to enhance economic empowerment for women in the ASEAN region in order to help catalyze ongoing effort at ASEAN Community building and attainment of SDGs.

2. To promote the role and cooperation between the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW), the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC), the ASEAN Women Entrepreneurship Network (AWEN) and UN Women in taking forward the implementation of projects on economic empowerment for women in ASEAN.

**Expected Date:** 12.00 – 13.00 hours, 22 September 2017

**Expected Venue:** Conference Room 7, United Nations Headquarters, New York

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<sup>1</sup> UN Resolution 70/1 25 September 2015, Paragraph 20

<sup>2</sup> UN Resolution 70/1 25 September 2015

**Format of the Meeting:**

- Seminar with Key Speakers from ASEAN, UN Women, and Successful Women Entrepreneurs recommended by ASEAN and UN Women.

**Draft Order of Proceedings:**

- 12.00 hours - Opening Remarks by H.E. Mr. Don Pramudwinai, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand (5 minutes)
- 12.05 hours - Dr. Suriya Chindawongse, Director-General, Department of ASEAN Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand as the Moderator, introduces UN Women and Panelists
- 12.10 - - Presentation by UN Women / Two Successful Entrepreneurs (15 minutes each)
- 12.55 hours
- 12.55 - - Wrap-up by Director-General, Department of ASEAN Affairs
- 13.00 hours

**Participants**

- Officials and key experts from ASEAN Member States, the ASEAN Secretariat, UN Women, media, and civil society organisations as well as other interested agencies. ASEAN’s dialogue / development / sectoral partners such as Canada, Germany, Norway etc.

**Possible Deliverables**

1. Development of ASEAN-led priority areas/catalysts that would help achieve the SDGs (especially Goal 5) at the national and regional level in the area of empowering gender equality especially women economic empowerment.
2. Ideas for concrete follow-up projects/activities to promote the complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that would help mainstream women into the ASEAN Community-building process and efforts to attain SDGs.

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