ASEAN Regional Integration Support from the EU (ARISE) Programme holds Closure Event

The ASEAN Regional Integration Support from the EU (ARISE) Programme, one of the most important EU-ASEAN programmes for regional economic integration, celebrated its successful closure on 8 June 2017 in Jakarta.

The event gathered the full spectrum of ARISE stakeholders: Ambassadors from ASEAN (CPRs) and EU Members States, ASEAN Secretariat top management and technical staff, ASEAN Sectoral Committees, ASEAN Development Partners, and representatives from the private sector.

2017 is a special year for the EU (60 years), ASEAN (50 years), and EU-ASEAN relations (40 Years). The ARISE closure event was yet another occasion to celebrate EU-ASEAN partnership and achievements together.

ARISE was an EU-funded support programme which started in 2012 with EUR 15 million provided by the European Union Development Cooperation Instrument. Its objective was to support the ASEAN Economic Integration process through the realisation of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). ARISE aimed at improving trade, customs and transport facilitation in ASEAN, enhancing quality infrastructure (standards) and food safety, as well as building the capacity building of the ASEAN Secretariat.

Four and a half years down the road, ARISE mobilised 6,500 expert man-days, organised 115 workshops attended by 4,300 participants, among them 1,370 participants from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam (CLMV).

In its opening remarks the EU Ambassador to ASEAN Francisco Fontan Pardo said: "I am happy to be here today to celebrate ARISE Closure and its numerous achievements. ARISE is a brand, and a good EU-ASEAN brand, led by a truly professional team of experts. A lot of technical work has been
delivered through the past years, contributing to the deepening of the ASEAN regional integration in support of AEC”.

The deep appreciation of ARISE was echoed by the Deputy Secretary-General for ASEAN Economic Community, Lim Hong Hin. “ARISE was timely launched to provide the much needed expertise and resources to facilitate our efforts to realise the objectives of the AEC Blueprint 2008-2015 for a single market and production base”. With regard to ARISE adaptability, he said: "ARISE was instrumental to help us develop specific sectoral plans to operationalised our new AEC Blueprint 2025”.

During the event a retrospective of ARISE main flagship support-actions were jointly presented by the ASEAN Secretariat, the ASEAN Sectoral Bodies, a representative from the EU-ASEAN Business Council (private sector) as well as the ARISE experts:

- **The ASEAN Trade Repository (ATR)**: a web-based portal to enhance transparency of trade and customs laws and procedures of all ten ASEAN Member States.
- **The ASEAN Solutions for Services, Investments and Trade (ASSIST)**: a web-based mechanism for ASEAN-based enterprises to refer trade-related cross-border issues within the framework of the AEC.
- **The AEC Blueprint 2025 M&E Framework**: this new Framework “enhances” the earlier monitoring system i.e. the AEC 2015 Scorecard, and includes outcomes monitoring and impact assessment.
- **The ASEAN Risk Assessment Centre (ARAC) for Food Safety**: a newly created regional coordinating centre for independent food safety risk assessment, formulate scientific opinions and provide advice on the safety of food. ARAC is based in Malaysia.
- **The ASEAN Customs Transit System (ATCS)**: a computerised Customs transit management system piloted in Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore. ACTS is a single electronic goods declaration from departure to destination, a single guarantee valid for the international journey, and a full end-to-end computerisation of operations.

On this special occasion, the ACTS software was symbolically handed over to the Deputy Secretary-General by the EU Ambassador. Thanks to ARISE, the ACTS Pilot has been fully developed, installed and tested in Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore. However the pilot does not yet have a legal operational environment and could not be run live by June 2017. This matter will have to be tackled ahead of the ACTS pilot implementation and future roll-out to CLMV countries, as foreseen under the next programme.

Looking ahead, in its closure remarks, the Head of Cooperation of the EU Delegation, Franck Viault, said: "I truly hope that the successor programme of ARISE, ARISE Plus, will be kick-started soon to keep the amazing momentum started under ARISE to several key facets of the ASEAN economic integration. I can assure you that my team is working hard on this".

ARISE Team Leader, Paul Mandl, concluded by stating: "It has been an incredible journey and I expressed my sincere appreciation and thanks to the ASEAN Secretariat, the ASEAN institutions, the EU Delegations, ASEAN Member States, the private sector and other dialogue partners whose support was integral to the success of the project". He emphasised as well that a major positive factor for the programme was being based in the ASEAN Secretariat where close working relationships, swift communications and trust have been at the forefront.

*For more information:*
ARISE Programme

ASEAN Trade Repository (ATR)

ASEAN Solutions for Services, Investments and Trade (ASSIST)

AEC Blueprint 2025 M&E Framework

ASEAN Risk Assessment Centre (ARAC) for Food Safety

ASEAN Customs Transit System (ATCS)

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