



EU-ASEAN YOUNG LEADERS FORUM & STRATEGIC THINKERS FORUM

PUBLIC DEBATE PROGRAMME 27 February 2018, Brussels

EU-ASEAN relations: the next forty years

08.30-09.30: Registration

09.30-12.30: Public Debate

09.30-10.45: Session 1: ASEAN, Europe and a volatile world

ASEAN and the European Union are adjusting and adapting to unexpected geopolitical transformations and uncertainties. Having just celebrated its golden jubilee, ASEAN is entering a critical new chapter in its quest for greater regional cooperation and integration amid expectations it will play a bigger and more relevant role in global affairs. The EU has reaffirmed its unity, ambition and resolve in the face of Brexit as well as rising pressure from populists and difficult neighbours. ASEAN's main challenge in the coming years will be to move towards a truly integrated economic community while also navigating the difficult US-China relationship and maintaining "ASEAN centrality" in the face of external pressures. Europe is charting a new course for its relations with its neighbourhood including Russia, Turkey and Africa as well as with China and has taken important steps in building a defence and security identity. Both ASEAN and the EU are dealing with immigration and refugees and have a shared interest in the preservation of the rules-based international order and developing new norms for cyberspace and tackling hybrid security threats.

- What are ASEAN and Europe's key economic and security interests and concerns in a changing regional and global environment?
- Can ASEAN and the EU join ranks more forcefully on tackling global challenges including climate change, sustainable development and terrorism?



- Are there key lessons that ASEAN and the EU share with each other on how to live and thrive in a changing world?
- How are young people in ASEAN and the EU reacting to the rapid global transformations and how is this impacting on regional politics?

Keynote address:

Le Luong Minh, Secretary General of ASEAN (2013-2017)

Speakers:

- **Clarita Carlos**, Professor of Political Science at the University of the Philippines
- **Bart Gaens**, Senior Research Fellow at the Finnish Institute of International Affairs' Global Security Research Programme
- **Le Luong Minh**, Secretary General of ASEAN (2013-2017) (TBC)
- **Peter Potman**, Director of the Asia and Oceania Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands
- **Jose Tavares**, Director General for ASEAN at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Indonesia

Moderated by:

Shada Islam, Director for Europe & Geopolitics at Friends of Europe

10.45-11.15 Coffee break

11.15-12.30 Session 2: Will EU-ASEAN relations still matter in forty years?

ASEAN-EU relations have grown and evolved steadily over the years, with both sides interacting on a range of economic, political and social issues. Meeting in Manila last August, ASEAN and EU ministers crafted an extensive and multi-faceted plan of action for a further upgrade of cooperation with a focus on bilateral ties, including security issues and connectivity, as well as on the wider global agenda including climate change, counter-terrorism and sustainable development. Ministers and the European Parliament have come out in favour of a resumption of negotiation on an EU-ASEAN free trade agreement. Contacts between ministers, policymakers, business leaders and civil society representatives are increasing. It hasn't always been plain-sailing, however. Differences over human rights and the application of EU standards in sectors such as palm oil and fisheries as well as the EU's long-standing quest to become a permanent member of the East Asia Summit continue to cast a shadow over relations.

- ASEAN-EU relations have shown a remarkable degree of resilience so far but will the relationship survive – and if it does will it still matter in forty years?
- In a volatile world, what can ASEAN and the EU do better and/or differently to reinforce relations in the coming years?
- Given their differences on key issues like human rights, can the EU and ASEAN forge a true strategic partnership and negotiate a free trade agreement?

- What can be done to promote greater people-to-people contacts – especially among young people – in ASEAN and Europe?

Speakers:

- **Reinhard Bütikofer**, Member of European Parliament and Rapporteur on EU-ASEAN relations
- **Suthad Setboonsarng**, Member of the Board of the Bank of Thailand
- **Annika Siirak**, PhD Candidate at the University of Tartu and EU-ASEAN Young Leader
- **Yeo Lay Hwee**, Director of the European Union Centre in Singapore

Moderated by:

Shada Islam, Director for Europe & Geopolitics at Friends of Europe

12.30-14.00: Networking Lunch (all participants and young leaders are invited)