



MEDIA RELEASE

LAUNCHING OF THE ASEAN CIRCLE

16 June 2017

On 16 June 2017 and in conjunction with the ASEAN@50 commemorative year, the Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, as well as the Ministry of Tourism and Culture will launch the ASEAN Circle.

The ASEAN Circle was launched by YB Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohamed, Minister of International Trade and Industry. YB Dato' Sri Reezal Merican Nisa Merican, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and YB Datuk Mas Ermeyati binti Samsudin, Deputy Minister of Tourism and Culture were also present and delivered their speeches at the event.

The ASEAN Circle is an initiative by ISIS Malaysia with the ministries overlooking the three core pillars of ASEAN, to establish a discussion group comprises of notable figures from public and private sectors, media, academia, captains of industry, think-tanks as well as civil society. Its establishment was proposed by YB Dato' Sri Mustapa during his discussion with ISIS Malaysia back on 6 March 2017.

The objective of ASEAN Circle is to enhance the overall understanding and awareness of ASEAN community among the citizens of Malaysia. Members of ASEAN Circle are expected to meet periodically to discuss and obtain inputs as well as exchange views on issues related to ASEAN. The outcome of the dialogue will serve as a direct feedback by stakeholders for the consideration of the government.

“This year is the 50th anniversary of ASEAN and therefore we must continue building upon our momentum to create a more cohesive and resilient regional grouping. Against the backdrop of challenging landscape and emerging megatrends, we need fresh and new ideas to enhance ASEAN economic integration. It is my hope that the formation of ASEAN Circle, only three months after the idea was proposed, will provide an avenue to generate new ideas as well as promote constructive discussions on the future of ASEAN”, Dato’ Sri Mustapa Mohamed said.

After the launching ceremony, the ASEAN Circle organised its inaugural ASEAN Circle Dialogue on “Mainstreaming the ASEAN Brand”. Three notable shared their views and visions on the development of ASEAN in Malaysia. They are Tan Sri Dato’ Dr Mohd Munir Majid, Chairman of ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ASEAN BAC), Associate Professor Dr Farish Ahmad Noor, S Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore and Mr Bunn Nagara, Senior Fellow at ISIS Malaysia. The discussion centred on how the government and other stakeholders can mainstream the ASEAN brand among Malaysians.

A key feature of the ASEAN Community established in 2015 is that it aspires to make ASEAN people-centred or in other words, to ensure that its peoples are at the heart of ASEAN. The establishment of ASEAN Community also seeks to inculcate its citizens with a sense of belonging to ASEAN and the region. It is envisaged that not only will the peoples of ASEAN benefit from the Community, but they will also be the driving force behind ASEAN’s development, progress and unity.

The launching of ASEAN Circle on 16 June 2017 is not only timely but extremely relevant in our quest to realise ASEAN Community Vision by 2025, through promoting greater awareness, enhancing public understanding and instilling deeper integration among the peoples of ASEAN.

16 June 2017

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