

EMBASSY OF MALAYSIA BERLIN

Newsletter

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ASEAN COMMUNITY 2015 AND BEYOND



Year 2015 marks a very important point for ASEAN as it welcomes the creation of its Community. The Community, comprising three pillars (Political-Security, Economic, Socio-Cultural) is aimed at transforming ASEAN into a integrated, secure and prosperous region where its people enjoy good quality of life. For Malaysia, 2015 is a special year as it assumes the Chairmanship of the Association. As one of the founding fathers of ASEAN, Malaysia's foreign policy places the Association as one of its key focus.

As part of Malaysia's ASEAN outreach effort, the Embassy organized a seminar "ASEAN Community 2015 and Beyond" at the Federal Foreign Office, Berlin on 4 December 2015. The seminar was organized in close cooperation with the German Federal Foreign Office, Berlin ASEAN Committee (BAC), Malaysian Investment Development Authority (MIDA), German Asia-Pacific Business Association (OAV), Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) and the Association of the German Chambers of Commerce and Industry (DiHK e.V.). The seminar was centred on the overall theme of looking back at

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ASEAN COMMUNITY 2015 AND BEYOND

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ASEAN's achievements and discussing how ASEAN could progress in the next decade. Focus were given on the economic relations between ASEAN and Germany, given economic-centric dynamics of relations between the two.

In his welcoming remarks, H.E. Dr. Riedel, Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific at the Federal Foreign Office underscored that the realization of the ASEAN Community will bring major implication to Germany's approach towards the Southeast Asia region from the political and economic standpoint. As such, Germany places great interest in ASEAN's community-building efforts. The ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in particular, offers new opportunities for German businesses through introduction of measures such as elimination of tariff, creation of single window and free movement of goods and people. He further stated that Germany stand to benefit from a more substantive engagement with Southeast Asia, and one way of doing so is by looking at things from ASEAN's point of view to better understand the region. The point was reiterated by H.E. Sithong Chitnhothinh, Ambassador of Lao PDR and Chair of the BAC, during his opening keynote.

Ambassador of Malaysia to the Federal Republic of Germany, H.E. Dato' Zulkifli Adnan, in his capacity as representative of the ASEAN Chair, delivered a presentation titled "*Examining Key Outcomes of the 27th ASEAN Summit*". The presentation highlighted the "*Kuala Lumpur Declaration on ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together*", which outlines ASEAN's

strategy for the period of 2016-2025. Dato' Zulkifli's presentation also touched on ASEAN's progress towards the realization of the ASEAN Economic Community. With its large market base, positive growth rate and growing middle class population, coupled with measures currently taken by ASEAN in areas such as trade, services and tariff reduction, the region is set to transform into a more competitive and liberal region economically. Being well positioned at the centre of global production networks, ASEAN seeks to make the most of its trade and investment links through engagement with external partners such as the various ASEAN+1 Free Trade Agreements and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).

One of the highlights of the seminar is a presentation titled "*Opportunities and Challenges for German Business in ASEAN*". The presentation was delivered by Dr. Imke Pente, Program Director of the ASEAN Experts Group of the OAV. In her presentation, Dr. Pente gave an overview on the Experts Group, which was established in January 2015 to uncover the potentials of Southeast Asia and identify ways towards stronger economic relations between Germany and Southeast Asia. Her presentation highlighted Southeast Asia's economic potentials, as well as the challenges faced in the process of tapping into these potentials. The Experts Group found that among others, a strong commitment to regional integration by the ASEAN Member States, continued domestic reforms and strong partnership between Germany and ASEAN are

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MALAYSIANS AWARDED GREEN TALENTS PRIZES BY BMBF

Berlin, 30 October - Two Malaysian lecturers were presented the "Green Talents" Prizes from German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) during a ceremony in Berlin. The Prize was given as part of the Green Talents – International Forum for High Potentials in Sustainable Development”, which is an initiative of BMBF to promote international exchange of innovative green ideas. Dr. Chong Meng Nan from the Monash University Malaysia and Dr. Chow Ming Fai from Universiti Tenaga Nasional received the prize, together with 25 other recipients from 19 countries. Mr Wilfried Kraus, Head of the Directorate for Sustainability, Climate and Energy at BMBF presented the award to the recipients.

The Green Talents Prize, under the patronage of the Federal Minister for Education and Research Johanna Wanka, is an

award given to approximately 25 young researchers each year. The winners come from numerous countries and scientific disciplines and are recognised for their outstanding achievements in making societies more sustainable. Selected by a -ranking jury of German experts, prize for the winners include unique access to the country’s research elite.



Dr. Chong Meng Nan (Left) and Dr. Chow Ming Fai (Right) with Ambassador Dato' Zulkifli Adnan after receiving the award.

DR. CHONG MENG NAN



Research Focus: Researching nanotechnology for the sustainable development of renewable energy and water purification

In his research, Dr. Meng Nan Chong is interfacing nanotechnology with photoreactor engineering in improvising innovative solutions to resolve energy and environmental-related issues. He maintains that this research can also be implemented to purify water sources and, while doing so, produce hydrogen energy. The research is expected to provide the “best sustainable solution to resolve the on-going water-energy nexus”.

DR. CHOW MING FAI



Research Focus: Urban storm water management, developing flood forecasting and mitigation system

Dr. Ming Fai Chow is developing new approaches for flood and storm water management. His research found that controlling the first 10 mm of storm water runoff can lead to a 50% reduction of the pollutant loading. His findings have now contributed to the design of storm water treatment systems that are more efficient and cost-effective.

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needed. Such partnership could be characterized by equality and mutual benefit spanning government and non-government actors. The outcome of the Experts Group's study as well as their recommendations are expected to be officially submitted to the German government in March 2016.

Two panel discussion took place during the seminar. The first, titled "*ASEAN Vision 2025 and the Road Ahead for the EU-ASEAN Strategic Partnership*", was moderated by H.E. Dr. Riedel and featured H.E. Amb. Nongnuth Phetcharatana, Ambassador of Thailand, Mr. Thomas Wiersing from the European External Action Service and Mr. Jürgen Stetten from FES. The session agreed that while efforts have been made to strengthen relations between EU and ASEAN, especially in recent years, more needs to be done by both sides. It was suggested that future cooperation could focus on areas such as security, cross-border management, connectivity, education and cultural exchange. Cooperation between ASEAN and EU needs to be based on mutual trust both sides should stand on equal footing.

The second panel session "*ASEAN Economic Community – 10 Years from Now*" was moderated by Mr. Felix Sutter from PricewaterhouseCooper AG Zürich and featured four panelists, namely Ms. Fideles Sadicon from the ASEAN Secretariat, Dr. Sufian Jusoh from the World Trade Institute at the University of Bern, Mr. Jürgen Stihl from B.Braun Melsungen AG and Ms. Nadine Fund from DIHK. The panel gave an overview on where ASEAN stands in term of the implementation of the AEC and shared their expectations for the next decade. They agreed that the ASEAN Community will be achieved via gradual transformation through implementation of various measures under the ASEAN Community Blueprints. Recognizing the challenges in implementing measures under the Blueprints, it is hoped that ASEAN would be able to fully implement those measures. Further

down the line, ASEAN will also have to deal with emerging issues such as ensuring sustainable development, food security and energy across all Member States. Some of the major challenges at present include ratification of agreements, low volume of intra-region trade, movement of labours, bureaucracy and many others.

Overall, the panel envisaged progressive economic liberalization of ASEAN in the next 10 years. The implementation of the AEC Blueprint, as well as existing free trade mechanisms such as the Regional Economic Comprehensive Partnership (RCEP) and Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) should create push factor for ASEAN in that direction. Panelists believe that external parties such as the EU can play their role in further advocating ASEAN's transformation into a more economically liberal region.



NATIONAL SPORTS DAY 2015

Berlin, 10 October - The Embassy joined Malaysians all over the world in celebrating the inaugural National Sports Day. Prime Minister Dato' Sri Najib Razak had during an event in Shah Alam, Selangor earlier that day declared that beginning 2015, the National Sports Day will be celebrated on every first Saturday in October. The National Sports Day is an initiative by the Government of Malaysia to promote healthy lifestyle and further develop Malaysia as a sporting nation, amongst other things. For the inaugural National Sports Day celebration, the Embassy chose to organize a cycling activity at Tempelhofer Feld. More than 25 participants took part in the activity. The event began around 10:10am with a short welcoming remark by H.E. Ambassador Dato' Zulkifli Adnan, who called participants to adopt sports as a part of everyday life. Shortly after, H.E. Ambassador flagged off the participants, who cycled around the old runway of the former Tempelhof Airport. The event was wrapped up with a simple, Malaysian-style picnic.



MCB ELECTS ITS NEW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Berlin, 8 November - The Malaysia Club Berlin (MCB) held its 2015 Annual General Meeting (AGM) at the Embassy of Malaysia. Some 60 registered members of the club attended the meeting. The Meeting was officiated by H.E. Ambassador Dato' Zulkifli Adnan, who is the Patron of the Club. In his opening remarks, H.E. Dato' Zulkifli Adnan stressed the Embassy's readiness to assist Malaysians in Germany in whichever way it can, and that Malaysians residing in Germany should not shy away from engaging the Embassy. Members of the club were also presented with a report on activities carried out / participated by the Club since the previous AGM and also their MCB membership cards.

An election for MCB's 2015/2016 executive committee took place during the AGM. The new line up of MCB's executive committee are as follows:

- 1) President: Mrs. Ita Hellmuth
- 2) Vice President: Mrs. Zubaidah Aziz-Lembke
- 3) Secretary: Ms. Sabrina Lee Lin Lin
- 4) Treasurer: Mrs. Mary Evers

Committee Members:

- 5) Ms. Hazel Hoo-Herzog
- 6) Mrs. Wendy Rohrbacher
- 7) Mr. William Toong Chon Kong
- 8) Mr. Tan Keat Aun

Ex-Officio:

- 9) Mohd Shuhada Othman

Auditors:

- 10) Mr. Azman Roslee Anuar
- 11) Mr. Chuah Cheng Hooi



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MALAYSIAN HANDICRAFTS AT BAZAAR BERLIN 2015

Just in time for the holiday season, Bazaar Berlin 2015 took place at Messe Berlin from 18 to 22 November 2015. With a history that dates back more than 50 years, the Bazaar, formerly called "Import Shop Berlin", is an international Sales Show for exotic gifts, oriental living and handicrafts. With the concept "Global Market for Local Products", each year, arts and crafts retailers and manufacturers meet in Berlin with enthusiastic buyers of high-quality ethnic and natural products.

To promote Malaysian handicraft to a wider international consumer market, the Malaysian Handicraft Development Corporation (Kraftangan Malaysia) once again participated in the Bazaar. The Malaysian booth featured an assortment of traditional Malaysian art and handicraft such as pottery, batik and ornaments. The booth, located at Hall 17 of Messe Berlin, also featured live demonstrations of rattan basket and traditional beaded Nyonya shoes making.



VISIT OF CHILDREN FROM GRUNDSCHULE AM BUSCHGRABEN

Berlin, 7 December - The Embassy was delighted to host a group of 18 Second Graders and 3 teachers from Grundschule am Buschgraben in Berlin-Zehlendorf. Our enthusiastic visitors undertook their excursion at the Embassy of Malaysia to learn more about Malaysia, its culture and its people. They visit began with a short video presentation, much to our little guests' amusement and excitement. They participated in a Q&A session afterwards, which mainly revolved around Malaysia's flora, fauna, people, weather (and also Formula 1). The group also listened to a recital of fairytales from the region and rounded up their visit by trying their hands on traditional Malaysian games and musical instruments such as *kompang*, *congkak* and *batik* painting.



BERLIN ASEAN COMMITTEE MEET TO DISCUSS PROGRAMME OF WORK



Berlin, 6 November - The Embassy of Malaysia hosted the Berlin ASEAN Committee (BAC) Meeting. The meeting, held under the stewardship of Lao PDR, was chaired by H.E. Ambassador Sithong Chitnhothinh, Ambassador of Lao PDR to the Federal Republic of Germany. ASEAN Ambassadors in Berlin as well as their representatives attended the meeting. The meeting was mainly held to discuss BAC's activities for the remainder of 2015.

BERLIN ASEAN COMMITTEE VISITS SAXONY



ASEAN Ambassadors posing for a group photo with Minister-President of Saxony, Mr. Stanislaw Tillich (centre)

Saxony, 12 November - ASEAN Ambassadors undertook a working visit to Dresden, capital of the Federal State of Saxony. The working visit, part of PDR's chairmanship of the Berlin ASEAN Committee (BAC), was held with the main objective of engaging the various federal states (*Länders*) in Germany as well as to explore new opportunities of cooperation between Southeast Asia and the federal states, in particular Saxony. At Dresden, the Ambassadors called on H.E. Stanislaw Tillich, Minister-President of Saxony, and held meetings with relevant stakeholder such as the Chamber of Commerce of Saxony. BAC members also visited a number of companies based in Dresden, which include *Elbe Flugzeugwerke GmbH* and *Ostsächsische Sparkasse*.

G7 HIGH-LEVEL MEETING DISCUSS GLOBAL MARITIME SECURITY ISSUES

Berlin, 14 December - The German Federal Foreign Office hosted a G7 High-level Meeting on Maritime Security. The conference, held with the theme "Enhancing Maritime Security – Connecting Regions – Governing the Commons" was opened by H.E. Mr. Michael Roth, Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office. It featured more than 25 experts representing governments, research institutes, think tanks and international organizations, each providing their perspective on various issues related to the overall theme of maritime security.

The conference was divided into several roundtable sessions that discussed wide-ranging issues such as maritime domain surveillance; illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing as well as inter-regional cooperation in maritime security. H.E. Ambassador Dato' Zulkifli Adnan was also amongst the speakers, speaking at the roundtable session "Peaceful Dispute Settlement in the Maritime Domain: The Role of International Law, Negotiations and Dialogue".



H.E. Dato' Zulkifli Adnan (seventh from left) in roundtable session "Peaceful Dispute Settlement in the Maritime Domain: The Role of International Law, Negotiations and Dialogue"



MRS. ITA HELLMUTH

President of the Malaysia Club Berlin 2015/2016

Mrs. Ita Hellmuth was elected as the President of Malaysia Club Berlin on 8 November 2015.

She came to Berlin in 1970s after completing her study in nursing in Southampton, United Kingdom. One of the longest-staying Malaysians in Berlin, Mrs. Hellmuth is a source of reference by many Malaysians who have just arrived in the city.

A mother of two (and also a grandmother of two), Mrs. Hellmuth loves to travel. She had visited many countries to get first-hand experience on different cultures around the globe. "Long train rides, plane journeys or bus commutes leave me enough time to just sit back, stare out the window, and reflect", described Mrs. Hellmuth. She also credited her passion to her past experience working at Lufthansa and Air Berlin. Mrs. Hellmuth, who loves spending time with people, currently enjoys working as an accredited free-lance tour guide.

With her election as the new President of Malaysia Club Berlin, she hopes that more Malaysians will join the Club. "East or west, home is the best. As we are a long way from home, active participation in the Club's programme can cure homesickness", she quipped.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS IN 2016

Holiday	Date
Chinese New Year	8 February
Good Friday	25 March
Easter Monday	28 March
Labour Day	1 May
Ascension Day	5 May
Whit Monday	16 May
Birthday of HM Yang di-Pertuan Agong	4 June
Eidul-Fitri*	6 & 7 July
National Day	31 August
Eidul-Adha*	12 September
Malaysia Day	16 September
Awwal Muharram	2 October
German Day of Unity	3 October
Maulidurrasul	12 December
Christmas	25 December

* Date subject to change

Note: Should a public holiday fall on Sunday, the following working day shall be observed as a holiday

The Embassy of Malaysia wishes you

HAPPY NEW YEAR

May 2016 bring you further joy, prosperity and success



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