



ASEAN DAY 2013 CELEBRATION

ASEAN Hall, ASEAN Secretariat, 23 August 2013

**Remarks by Ambassador Emaleen Abd Rahman Teo
Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN
(CPR)**

Your Excellency Mr. Le Luong Minh, Secretary General of ASEAN,
Your Excellency Wardhana, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of the
Republic of Indonesia,
Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour for my colleagues from the Committee of Permanent Representatives and I to be here to celebrate with you, 46 years of the founding of ASEAN.

I believe we have much to celebrate. From a region of conflict and fragmented economies in the 1950s and 60s, Southeast Asia today is enjoying peace and stability. The economic performance of ASEAN remains robust despite a weak global economy and based on a recent report by Standard and Poor's, ASEAN will outperform other economies in the Asia Pacific with 5.6 per cent growth in 2014.

ASEAN has also become one of the most successful organisations in the world and we are well on our way to becoming a community of politically cohesive and socially responsible nations whose economies are integrated. So, ASEAN has come a long way since its establishment in 1967.

Of course, our path to becoming a community is not without challenges. The financial crisis of 1997 was a time of hardship for many ASEAN countries. And as a region that is prone to natural disasters, we were devastated by the tsunami that struck us in 2004. But through our collective efforts, we were able to overcome these challenges. We emerged stronger and grew closer as a result.

We realise that our future is intertwined and that we must put our people at the forefront of our efforts to build our community. For this reason, Brunei Darussalam with this year's theme, "Our People, Our Future Together" has emphasised the role of our people in ASEAN's community building efforts. Throughout its chairmanship, Brunei Darussalam has organised programmes that are intended to equip our young people who are our future citizens, with the necessary attributes and values for tomorrow challenges.

At the same time, we recognise that for us to realise a truly people-centred community, our people must have a sense of belonging to ASEAN and the results from our work must trickle down to the people so that they will feel the benefits. Towards this end, raising the people's awareness of ASEAN is crucial so they will not only feel that they are part of the ASEAN community but that they can also take advantage of the benefits that ASEAN can offer them.

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

ASEAN's success today would not have been possible without the support and assistance of our dialogue partners and friends. We are appreciative of their friendship and support and ASEAN will continue to work closely with our partners and friends to strengthen our partnerships and to ensure the maintenance of peace, stability and prosperity in the region.

In conclusion, ASEAN has many reasons to celebrate and I'm confident, that ASEAN will continue to have a bright and prosperous future.

So, thank you very much for your presence here and a very Happy ASEAN Day to all.