

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

BY H.E. LE LUONG MINH, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF ASEAN
ON CREATIVE INDUSTRIES AS AN ENGINE FOR GROWTH OF ASEAN

At YTN Future Strategy Forum 2014

10.40 – 10.55 am, 10 December 2014, Seoul

*Your Excellency, Mr Kyung-Hwan Choi, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of
Korea*

Excellencies,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen

I thank YTN and you all for the opportunity to be part of this important conference centering on innovation and creative economy and share with you the progress of ASEAN Community building and my thoughts on how creative industries can be an engine for the growth of ASEAN.

ASEAN: A Community of Opportunities

When the Association came into being 47 years ago with only five members, ASEAN was established for practical political reasons. Today, with 10 Member States and a combined population of approximately 620 millions and a combined GDP of nearly 2.5 trillion US dollars, ASEAN as a whole has the size of a seventh largest economy in the world, and the third in Asia, after China and Japan. It is projected that ASEAN could become the fourth-largest economy by 2050.

With its strategic location, sitting in the midst of giant economies like China, Japan and India, and with active economic relations with the USA, the EU, the Republic of Korea, and Australia, and with abundant natural resources, high-quality and young human resources, ASEAN has engaged economically, by way of trade, investment and people-to-people contacts, with all the major economies of the world. It has also gained strategic importance and drawn the attention of all major global players. A total of 81 countries across continents have established diplomatic relations with and appointed their envoys to ASEAN, and the number is growing.

ASEAN is one of the most diversified regions in the world, with many ethnicities and languages as well as rich cultures and heritages. As it has always been tied together by multiple threads of history and culture, today the ASEAN region is increasingly linked by business networks, trading relationships, and shared resources through the ASEAN integration process and its outward orientation.

As the ASEAN Community will be established by the end of 2015, we envisage ASEAN as an integrated region where there are abundant and varying opportunities for business, greater community interactions and personal growth, a region that is fully connected to the rest of the world, able to turn diversity into opportunities so that ASEAN can be proudly called a Community of Opportunities.

Creative Industries: An Engine for Growth of ASEAN

As ASEAN has achieved substantial progress in its Community building process during the last ten years, much of it can be attributed to a positive external economic environment, higher levels of international trade and investment, and an

expanding labor force that is more educated and able to support moving up the value chain from agriculture to manufacturing and higher value-added activities. For ASEAN to make the push to a more advanced level of integration and to sustain economic growth and competitiveness, ASEAN needs to consider exploring new drivers for growth by looking towards our own resources, building on a knowledge-based economy, including unlocking the value of our diverse culture.

In this context, culture is increasingly recognised as an important pillar in development. In recent years, it has moved higher on the agenda of governments and international organisations alike. The “Hue Declaration on Culture for ASEAN Community’s Sustainable Development” adopted by ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Culture and Arts in April 2014 highlights culture as an important driver and enabler for growth. A Working Group on Content and Production under the purview of the ASEAN Senior Officials Responsible for Information was established in June 2014 to support production/co-production of new media content, regional cultural identity and heritage, and to promote the use of digital technologies to increase the circulation of ASEAN content inside and outside the region, amongst others. All these new initiatives have been undertaken to harness the contribution of culture to inclusive economic development.

Indeed, the success story of cultural and creative industries in other countries sets an excellent example for ASEAN to emulate. For example, here in Korea, the content industries accounted for 2.4% of GDP in 2011, while the figures for Thailand was 1.8%, Singapore 1.6% and Malaysia 0.7%.

Many ASEAN Member States are beginning to actively promote themselves in the global knowledge-based and creative industries and use it to attract investment and develop the service sectors. We have seen the top-grade movies and TV programs being shot on location in ASEAN.

But ASEAN is not just a location for foreign productions. We can do more in the creative industries, especially to enhance investment and promote the mobility of talent in our region.

The successes demonstrate clearly how leveraging on our cultural heritage and strengthening our knowledge and creative industries can contribute effectively to the economic growth of ASEAN.

As we discuss future strategy, let me share with you some thoughts on how we can turn cultural diversity and local knowledge into opportunities and realities. ASEAN's economic community building efforts will reach a milestone come 2015. And the journey will continue past 2015. New challenges are emerging and will require innovative and creative solutions. ASEAN has already set its sights to the future with its Leaders committed to create a "Post-2015 Vision" to realise an ASEAN community that is politically cohesive, economically integrated, socially responsible and a truly people-oriented, people-centred and rules-based ASEAN.

Going forward, the creative industry can be a key bastion of ASEAN's future technological innovation and creativity initiatives, and channelled in ways that broadly benefit society. The creative industry in developing economies, like ASEAN, constitutes a new dynamic sector. Indeed, opportunities abound and the benefits are immeasurable. As in the past, technology will undeniably shape the

future's frontiers and will continue to be a game changer, shifting the balance of opportunities across a vast network of sectors in society.

To make that happen, we need to work together, in all kinds of mechanisms such as government-to-government, government-to-business, business-to-business, and people-to-people, to nurture our creative talent and harness the strength and excellence of our artistic and cultural heritage in order to transform it into socio-economic development.

Many of our members have seen the success and the power of Korean Hallyu (or Korean Wave) which has effectively popularized Korean culture since the late 1990s, and harnessed it for innovation, technological and economic development through various forms like K-drama, K-pop, film, animation, smartphones, automobile, etc.

The increasing number of ASEAN people going to work, settle and study in Korea and Koreans to the ASEAN region provides a great opportunity to amplify the cultural links between us, creating mutual respect between our cultures and building our reputation as desirable and welcoming destinations for visitors and investments.

On the government side, we are working to further consolidate the existing cultural ties as they are integral to strengthening business, political and trade relationships, and exploring ways to promote and encourage co-productions and investments between the Republic of Korea and ASEAN in culture and creative industries.

An initiative to further promote film cooperation in ASEAN is being discussed to utilise the power of film and audio-visual images in the advancement of potential economic and socio-cultural gains, share film resources, infrastructure and facilities in our region. It is interesting to note that the initial discussion about film in ASEAN was kicked start amongst ASEAN participants at the Asian Film Commissions Network (AFCNet) meeting held in Busan in March 2012. A series of other programs have been identified to develop the market for ASEAN arts and culture, such as ASEAN arts management in the creative industries, the ASEAN performing arts market, cultural tourism, heritage parks as part of ecotourism and preserving cultural heritage, among others. These are areas for potential cooperation with the Republic of Korea and other dialogue partners.

At the same time, the Government of the Republic of Korea is taking the initiative to build an Asia Culture Complex in Kwangju to support artistic collaborations and creative exchanges. This infrastructure will provide reassurance that ASEAN and Republic of Korea artists have more access to international exhibitions, thus enhancing their artistic collaborations and creative exchanges. In addition, ASEAN and the Republic of Korea are working towards making culture and creative industries an integrated multi-platform to support our cooperation and benefit our peoples.

However, the efforts of governments alone are not enough. We need to improve the enabling environment that will promote more investment and to advance opportunities for cultural and creative projects. There are already a number of measures undertaken by ASEAN, such as providing a level playing field for companies to compete by enacting competition laws, providing a legal framework of IP laws to protect innovations, creations as well as designs and ensuring better

consumer protection. Initiatives under the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity are being implemented to create the conditions for producing high-quality content to appeal global audience.

As ASEAN has a relatively youthful and multicultural population, we need to work with educational institutions to develop the skills and knowledge to enhance professional development, while more educational and internship opportunities are needed to develop future entrepreneurs and leaders. In addition, supportive tax and other measures are needed to encourage more creativity and talent in such industries.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

ASEAN is one of the most dynamic regions in the wider dynamic Asia-Pacific with great opportunities. ASEAN welcomes all partners who have interest working with us to transform our cultures and diversities into opportunities, making creative industries an engine of growth. This will make ASEAN more connected and a responsible member of the international community where culture and creative industries play an important role in sustainable development. In ASEAN, you have opportunities.

Thank you!