

**Remarks by
H.E. Le Luong Minh
Secretary-General of ASEAN
on the occasion of the celebration of the 47th ASEAN Day
18 August 2014, ASEAN Hall**

*Excellency, Marty Natalagewa, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia,
Excellencies, Ambassadors,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

As we gather today to celebrate another anniversary of ASEAN's founding, we are also at the threshold of realizing a dream for a "prosperous and peaceful community of Southeast Asian Nations" that began 47 years ago, on 8 August 1967. That long-aspired dream is about to come true! ASEAN is poised to proclaim the realization of the ASEAN Community by the end of next year. This will be another epic milestone signaling Southeast Asia's irrefutable connectivity and cohesiveness – where the peoples enjoy the blessings of peace, freedom and prosperity. This year's theme of "Moving Forward in Unity to a Peaceful and Prosperous Community" constitutes another reflection of ASEAN's enduring relevance and its proud standing as the foremost forum for dialogue and cooperation in the region.

Through ASEAN unity and cooperation, much has been achieved in nearly five decades. Amidst great diversity in our histories and cultures, amidst political strife and financial volatility elsewhere in the world, ASEAN has been able to maintain peace and stability in the region and cooperate with one another to enable our economies to flourish and our peoples to reach their highest potentials. Indeed, the momentum of progress has been established and will continue even beyond 2015.

While progress has been achieved in many fronts, and this is a cause for pride and gratitude, there remain challenges in the horizon. ASEAN is altogether facing a changing and shifting geo-political and geo-economic landscape that is impacting the peace, security and stability of the region. While we strengthen our connectivity and consolidate the gains of the ASEAN Community, with ASEAN centrality, credibility and continuing relevance in mind, as we are setting our sights beyond 2015 and strengthening our institutions and mechanisms, we need to continue efforts in ensuring a united and collective response to these contemporary and emerging challenges,

ASEAN's success will ultimately be measured by how our Community building efforts are relevant to and have benefited the lives of the ASEAN peoples. By 2015 and beyond, we should continue to invest in our peoples, institutions and enterprises. Achieving our goals for our peoples will require the strong coherence and greater convergence of the political, economic and socio-cultural pillars of the ASEAN Community. Strengthening our sense of community and collective responsibility, we need to empower all stakeholders and ensure their greater participation in building and reaping the benefits of a truly people-oriented and people-centred ASEAN Community.

As we celebrate ASEAN Day today with all ASEAN Member States and the international community, may the singular vision which has guided ASEAN's cause the past 47 years continue to serve as our strength and inspiration as we seek to establish the ASEAN Community by next year and ensure ASEAN's perpetuity beyond 2015.

A happy ASEAN Day to all!