

ASEAN-IPR Newsletter

Forging and Fostering Peace

Highlights

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Dear Readers,

As we draw to the new year of 2025, ASEAN-IPR is delighted to present the second edition of our newsletter. Building on the momentum of our inaugural issue, this edition continues to serve as a platform to share updates, insights, and stories that reflect our commitment to forge and foster peace in the region and beyond.

Through this Newsletter, we aim to keep our stakeholders and the general public informed about our latest activities and initiatives while providing space to explore issues, share best practices, and highlight efforts that foster harmony within our diverse Community.

In this issue, we delve deeper into topics that resonate with ASEAN-IPR's mandate and functions, featuring highlights from recent projects, including our signature activities. You'll also find special insights from our experts and participants who have been part of our initiatives.

Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to growing together as we build a more peaceful and resilient ASEAN Community. Wishing you a prosperous and fulfilling New Year 2025!

I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja

Executive Director, ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation

Newsletter



Focus Group Discussion (FGD): Cybersecurity and the Role of Information Technology in Fostering a Culture of Peace in ASEAN

Jakarta, 11-12 July 2024 – With the support from the Government of the Republic of Korea through the ASEAN-Korea Cooperation Fund (AKCF), ASEAN-IPR convened a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) in Jakarta to establish the foundational framework for the upcoming “ASEAN-IPR Regional Conference on Cybersecurity and the Role of Information Technology in Fostering a Culture of Peace in ASEAN”. The FGD was attended by over 20 participants, coming from government officials, academics, and representatives from think tanks across the region. Adding depth to the discussion, experts from CMI Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation and the Institute for National Security Strategy (INSS) Korea joined the discussion, offering valuable insights and enriching perspectives on the critical intersection of cybersecurity and peacebuilding. Outcomes of the FGD laid a strong foundation for shaping the guiding questions and key topics that will drive the agenda of our upcoming Regional Conference.



In 2025, the ASEAN-IPR Regional Conference on Cybersecurity and the Role of Information and Technology in Fostering a Culture of Peace in ASEAN will be scheduled to take place from 29 July to 2 August 2024 in Bangkok, Thailand. It will gather policymakers, experts, stakeholders, and the private sector to engage in substantive discussions on harnessing information technology as a tool for fostering peace and security in ASEAN.

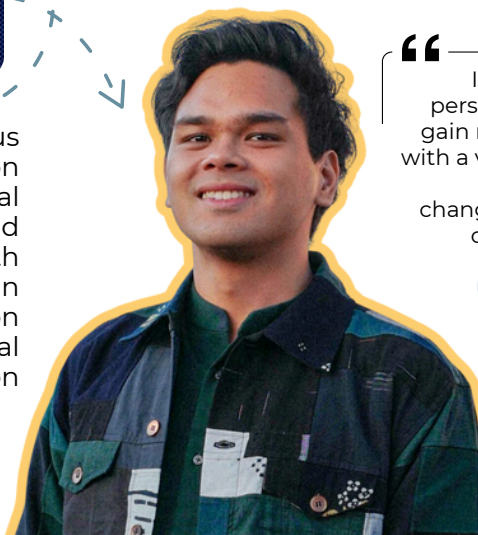


ASEAN-IPR Social Sips & Bites



Jakarta, 27 July 2024 – Youths from various academic and/or professional fields gathered on “ASEAN-IPR Social Sips & Bites” to discuss the social aspect of digital development, social media, and cybersecurity. As we believe that youth perspectives are crucial for ensuring inclusivity in cybersecurity-related discussions, this discussion was also convened to enrich the substantial discourse of our upcoming Regional Conference on Cybersecurity, scheduled for early 2025.

The discussion brought fresh perspectives as youth wield much potential to create and promote narratives of peace, especially in this digital era. Moreover, this first-ever initiative to engage with the youth in a semi-formal discussion was part of the Institute’s commitment to always include youth as the top priority target beneficiaries of ASEAN-IPR’s programmes and activities. One of the participants on the Social Sips & Bites hoped that the discussion can bring positive change



“ It was great to get diverse perspectives on the topic and gain new insights from friends with a variety of life experiences. I'm hopeful that positive changes, whether big or small, can truly come out of this.

REUBEN NATHANIEL
Musician and Student in
AI & Sustainable
Technologies

ASEAN-IPR Training: Enhancing the Role of Youth in Peacebuilding

Tangerang, Indonesia, 29 July-2 August – Over 30 youth from ASEAN Member States, Timor-Leste, and Japan participated in the ASEAN-IPR Training: Enhancing the Role of Youth in Peacebuilding, fostering a diverse and collaborative environment for the next generation of peacebuilders. Throughout the five-day training, participants engaged in intensive workshops and interactive sessions designed to equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to serve as effective agents of peace in their communities.

One of the key highlights of the Training was a one-day study visit to the PeaceGeneration Community in Bandung, where participants were able to witness first-hand the impactful work of grassroots peace initiatives and engage with youths that are driving positive change at the community level. This training was made possible with the generous support from the Government of Japan through Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF).



57th ASEAN Day Open House & ASEAN-IPR Website Revamp Soft Launch

ASEAN Headquarters, Jakarta, 8 August 2024 – Through endorsement and generous support of the government of the Lao PDR, 2024 ASEAN Chair, ASEAN-IPR rolled out an exhibition booth during at the 57th ASEAN Day Open House – the first post-pandemic ASEAN Day Open House. Throughout the course of the exhibition, ASEAN-IPR Team engaged with visitors to introduce the work of the Institute and disseminate its latest publications and/or merchandise, and provide information of upcoming activities and/or initiatives.

A notable highlight was the introduction of the revamped ASEAN-IPR Website, marking its first major remodel since the Website’s initial launch six years prior on the 51st ASEAN Day. The Website revamp ensures all stakeholders continue to stay informed about the Institute’s work and activities while enjoying an elevated user interface/user experience. Explore the new ASEAN-IPR website and catch a recap of the 57th ASEAN Day celebrations by clicking [here](#).



ASEAN-IPR Discussion Series 2024, Session 2: Unravelling Cyberterrorism: Analysing Its Impact on National Security



Jakarta, 14 August 2024 – ASEAN-IPR kicked off the 2024 Discussion Series with the inaugural session titled “Unravelling Cyberterrorism: Analysing its Impact on National Security,” bringing together audience of over 60 in-person participants and 71 online attendees to explore this critical issue.

In this session, the speakers and participants underscore the significant impacts and vulnerabilities posed by cyberterrorism to national and regional security, especially concerning critical national infrastructure and societal safety. Another key takeaway from the discussion was the need to develop comprehensive strategies encompassing legal frameworks, interagency cooperation, and public-private partnerships to strengthen resilience against cyberterrorism.

The ASEAN-IPR Discussion Series 2024 Sessions were made possible with the support from Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI).

ASEAN-IPR’s Series of Meetings in Luang Prabang, Lao PDR

Luang Prabang, 18 August 2024 – ASEAN-IPR held a series of its Governing Council (GC) and Advisory Board (AB) meetings in the beautiful city of Luang Prabang, Lao PDR.

Under the chairmanship of Lao PDR, the series of meetings began with the 15th Meeting of the AB, where the Meeting deliberated on research priorities and developed initiatives to be led by the Board. The 34th Meeting of the GC followed, which reviewed and considered newly proposed activities and discussed the Institute’s operations. Amongst those approved during the 34th GC Meeting was the the Institute’s Annual Report for 2023, to be submitted to the 28th Meeting of the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) Council.

The series of meetings culminated in the annual Interface Meeting between the Governing Council and Advisory Board, which was aimed to align strategies and conduct the Institute’s work as envisioned by ASEAN Leaders.





Comparative Study Visit to INSS

Seoul, 2-3 September 2024 – With the support of ASEAN-Korea Cooperation Fund (AKCF), the ASEAN-IPR Team together with regional experts in cybersecurity, conducted a comparative study visit to Seoul, Republic of Korea. This activity is also part of a series of pre-activities leading up to the “ASEAN-IPR Regional Conference on Cybersecurity and the Role of Information Technology in Fostering a Culture of Peace in ASEAN”, scheduled to be convened in early 2025.

The Study Visit was organised in collaboration with the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS), a South Korean think tank with expertise in national and regional security studies. The study visit provided a platform for both institutions and participants to exchange knowledge and share best practices on cybersecurity, with a focus on advancing the understanding of cyber peacebuilding. During the study exchanges, the ASEAN-IPR with the regional experts also presented insights and recommendations from a prior Focused Group Discussion, contributing to the depth of the dialogue and regional perspective to cybersecurity and peacebuilding efforts.

One of INSS’ experts shared valuable insights from the exchange that a major cybersecurity concern globally is the growing issue of disinformation:

“*“A major cybersecurity concern globally is also the growing issue of disinformation. Both domestic and foreign actors, driven by economic or political motives, continue to spread false information, posing significant challenges.”* – **Dr. Myong-hyun GO, INSS Korea.**



International Conference on Women, Peace and Security

Manila, 28-30 October 2024 – ASEAN-IPR proudly participated in and contributed to the International Conference on Women, Peace & Security (WPS), organised by the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines. The Conference provided a platform to develop strategies that enhance women’s participation in peacemaking processes and advance gender equality in peace and security initiatives across the region. Notably, members of the ASEAN Women for Peace Registry (AWPR) – ASEAN-IPR’s network of women experts in peacebuilding – played an active and integral role in the discussions.

ASEAN-IPR contributed to two key sessions of the Conference — namely “Parliamentary Roundtable on Strengthening Legislative Support for the Women, Peace and Security Agenda” and the “Special Forum on Bridging Regions for WPS”, where Members of the AWPR engaged with women peacebuilders from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

Additionally, ASEAN-IPR and The Asia Foundation, with the support of the ASEAN-Australia Political Security Partnership (APSP), held a parallel event titled “WPS Knowledge Exchange between the AWPR and the Australian WPS Civil Society Coalition”.

In alignment with the goals of the conference, the AWPR released a message on this particular conference which could be accessed [here](#).

ASEAN-IPR Training Programme on Women, Peace and Security 2024

Since 2021, ASEAN-IPR has been developing its Training Programme on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) to equip government officials from ASEAN Member States with the necessary skills and knowledge in conflict resolution and peacebuilding through gender-sensitive lens. In 2024, the Training Programme kick-started with Module Zero, an online introductory session held on 26-27 September, which introduced participants to key concepts in women, peace, and security, as well as relevant normative and international frameworks.

Building on this foundation, from 30 September to 4 October 2024, the first in-person session of the Training Programme, comprising of Module One and Two was held in Bangkok, Thailand. Participants from ASEAN Member States and Timor-Leste engaged in highly interactive sessions with information-packed presentations, case studies and simulations on conflict analysis, conflict resolution, post-conflict reconstruction and recovery, as well as peacebuilding from a gender-sensitive lens, all within the four pillars of the WPS Agenda.

Organised with the support of the UK Mission to ASEAN and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), the Training underscores ASEAN's commitment to promoting gender-inclusive peacebuilding. The next phase of the Training Programme, Module Three, tailored for senior officials, is set to take place in 2025, marking the final stage of this training initiative. Stay updated with our social media and website for more updates on this initiative!





ASEAN-IPR & KAICIID Training on Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue for ASEAN Officials

Penang, Malaysia, 11-15 November 2024 – Twenty-three participants from ASEAN Member States and ASEAN entities participated in the second occasion of the ASEAN-IPR & KAICIID Training on Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue for ASEAN Officials. Representing a diverse range of backgrounds, participants came together in a spirit of solidarity with a shared goal to deepen understanding of interreligious and intercultural dialogue; as well as explore how such insights could be integrated into their daily roles as duty bearers, contributing to a more cohesive and harmonious region.

Throughout the five-day Training, participants were equipped with an introduction to dialogue including essentials and fundamental skills; conflict analysis, conflict transformation and peacebuilding framework; practical dialogue and outcome assessment. The Training was conducted through interactive sessions such as role-play, simulation exercises, and mentoring sessions. Participants also had a one full-day visit to religious sites in Penang, the city of cultural melting pot.

A participant highlighted a key takeaway from that the Training which brought significant impact to herself:



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“This training has been incredibly valuable as I can apply what I learned in my daily interactions with colleagues, family, and friends. It has helped me better appreciate the importance of meaningful conversations and empathy in understanding others. The sessions were not only insightful but also thoroughly enjoyable.”

– Fatimah, ASEAN Foundation

In a world that continues to grow more diverse, dialogue offers a valuable route toward fostering peace and promoting mutual understanding. Thus, reflecting on the success of the Training, ASEAN-IPR will continue its collaboration with KAICIID to conduct the next occasion of this Training in 2025.



35th Meeting of the ASEAN-IPR Governing Council

Jakarta, 19 November 2024 – The ASEAN-IPR Governing Council (GC), as the Institute's highest decision-making body, conducted its 35th Meeting at the ASEAN-IPR Secretariat, Jakarta. This was the last GC Meeting under the Chairmanship of Lao PDR in 2024, where they deliberated and reviewed various projects and activities in 2024; and looked at the Provisional Annual Work Plan for 2025. The Meeting was conducted just one day following ASEAN-IPR's 12th anniversary, which was commemorated every 18 November. Consequently, the Representative of Cambodia presented a token of recognition to ASEAN-IPR in celebration its 12th anniversary, commending its contributions to promoting sustainable peace in the region.



The Meeting witnessed handover of Chairmanship from H.E. Bovonethat Douangchack (Lao PDR) to H.E. Sarah Al Bakri Devadason (Malaysia), with ASEAN-IPR and all Members of the GC extending appreciation to Lao PDR for its leadership in 2024; as well as everyone's readiness to support and work with Malaysia for 2025.

ASEAN-IPR/ZIF Peer-to-Peer Seminar on Peace Facilitation and Dialogue



Jakarta, 21-22 November 2024 – ASEAN-IPR in a flagship collaboration with Center for International Peace Operations (ZIF), convened "Peer-to-Peer Seminar on Peace Facilitation and Dialogue". This collaboration was made possible with the generous support of the German Federal Foreign Office.

The Seminar brought together twelve high-level representatives from ASEAN Member States, including members of the Advisory Board (AB) and the ASEAN Women for Peace Registry (AWPR). Participants engaged in a highly dialogical, reflective, and interactive methodology on key concepts, principles, and norms of peace facilitation, mediation, negotiation, and diplomacy – held under Chatham House Rules. The Seminar also provided a platform for exchanging experiences and knowledge on how these practices have been or could be applied within the Southeast Asian context.

This initiative also underscored ASEAN-IPR's role in fostering connections and collaboration with relevant institutions and organisations within ASEAN Member States, as well as across other regions and at the international level. By facilitating such linkages, ASEAN-IPR continues to promote culture of peace while strengthening regional capacity and understanding in peacebuilding efforts across the region and beyond.



ASEAN-IPR Discussion Series 2024, Session 2



Jakarta, 12 December 2024 – ASEAN-IPR conducted the second session of its discussion series, with a total of over 100 participants, joining both in-person and online. The session, titled "Empowering Participation: Ensuring Women's Full and Meaningful Involvement in Peacekeeping Efforts," aimed to highlight the invaluable contributions of women peacekeepers from diverse backgrounds, emphasising their roles, values, and strengths in peacekeeping operations.

The Session featured distinguished female peacekeepers who shared their personal experiences and insights into the challenges and successes of women in peacekeeping roles: Col. Ratih Pusparini, the first Indonesian female peacekeeper to serve in MONUC, UNIFIL, and UNSMIS; Ms. Farah Zamira binti Farush Khan, the first Malaysian female civilian officer to serve in UNIFIL; and Lt. Col. Melanie Lake, MSM, CD, Canadian Armed Forces Liaison Officer to Canada's Ambassador for Women, Peace, and Security.



The ASEAN-IPR Discussion Series 2024 Sessions were made possible with the support from Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI).

Signing Ceremony of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with The International Dialogue – KAICIID



Virtual, 12 December 2024 – Since their first collaboration in 2020, ASEAN-IPR and The International Dialogue Centre – KAICIID have collaborated on a variety of initiatives. These efforts have included empowering women and youth to build sustainable peace and developing tailor-made training programmes on interreligious and intercultural dialogue (IRD/ICD) for ASEAN officials. Building on their shared commitment to fostering peace, the ASEAN-IPR and KAICIID formalised their partnership through signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two institutions on 12 December 2024. The signing marked a significant milestone in collective efforts to promote peace, social cohesion, and mutual understanding across the region and beyond.

Such strengthened collaboration will facilitate the smooth implementation of future joint projects and activities, including the 2025 ASEAN-IPR and KAICIID Training on IRD and ICD for ASEAN Officials, as well as potential new initiatives aimed at furthering peace and cooperation in the region.



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