



## **ASEAN UNIVERSITY NETWORK**

### **Joint Statement of the 2<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN Plus Three Youth Summit 2012**

**“How can Asian youth achieve global citizenship and intercultural competence?”**

**Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam**

#### **I. Introduction**

1. We, the students of the ASEAN University Network (AUN) Member Universities and the Plus Three countries, gathered on 29 June 2012 at Vietnam National University-Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam on the occasion of the 13<sup>th</sup> AUN Educational Forum and Young Speakers Contest.
2. We recognised the need to achieve intercultural competence and global citizenship. Intercultural competence is the ability to understand people from different cultures, to communicate effectively with one another, and to develop primary relationships with individuals of other cultures and traditions. Global citizenship is a state of awareness and responsibility towards people of other nations. A global citizen is conscious of the human community and acts accordingly.
3. We reaffirmed our role as youths in building bridges to promote reconciliatory and collaborative development between nations;
4. We noted with satisfaction the efforts of our governments, universities and other sectors in making efforts to foster global citizenship and intercultural competence;
5. We believed that the solution in achieving intercultural competence lies within opening up, accepting each other, and realising that we are not bound by racial, cultural and national borders.

#### **II. Importance of Global Citizenship and Intercultural Competence to ASEAN+3**

1. In order to fully realise the “*One Vision, One Identity and One Community*” aim of the ASEAN+3, citizens of its member countries must first possess a genuine and comprehensive understanding of the region’s diversity.
2. We believe that intercultural competence is not an add-on but a necessary element of true regional integration. It provides the ability for long-term collaborative efforts complementing economic and political aspirations through the promotion of understanding between cultures.
3. We must be mindful that these efforts are sustainable, accessible, and are inclusive of indigenous cultures and minority groups. These efforts must be simultaneously addressed

with the narrowing of economic gaps between member states, which we recognise may serve as hindrances to integration.

### **III. Achievement of Global Citizenship and Intercultural Competence by Asian Youth**

#### ***A. The actions Asian youth can undertake to embody global citizenship and possess intercultural competence***

1. Deepen understanding of their own culture, thereby preserving the diverse cultural heritage of their respective countries, including respect for indigenous and minority ethnic groups. This enables us to seek common ground and inculcate awareness of our culture while learning about others;
2. Strengthen competence in intercultural communication by continuously developing ourselves in professional knowledge and communication skills in foreign languages;
3. Seek to travel to as many countries as possible to study the history, language, and culture of each state to understand how countries are interrelated;
4. Maximise the use of information and communication technology (ICT) especially social media to establish cross-border networks; and
5. Concern and involve ourselves with international current events and issues, since challenges we face today cannot be confined to one country or one region but affect us all.

#### ***B. Recommendations of youth for the Universities to foster global citizenship and cultivate intercultural competence***

1. Recognise the role of higher education in achieving global citizenship and intercultural competence through a holistic approach – involving everyone with a stake in the education of the youth – with a stress on transformative and participatory learning. We urge the revision of educational frameworks to better integrate an intercultural perspective into lessons across disciplines;
2. Highlight aspects such as social justice, the appreciation of diversity and the importance of sustainable development in current educational curricula;
3. Emphasise the need to value our regional history, including conflicts and rivalries between nations, to prevent historical revisionism; in addition to learning about peace-building efforts;
4. Recognise that there are two ways to promote global citizenship:
  - a. Formally, including but not limited to, student and teacher exchange programmes, scholarship provisions, diversity symposiums, joint virtual classrooms, joint dissertation defenses, the promotion of ASEAN studies, foreign language requirements, trainings and conferences, research collaborations, peace dialogues and trans-national internship programs; and

- b. Informally, including but not limited to, cultural expositions (expos), home stay exchanges, volunteer work with international organisations or non-governmental organisations, sporting events and cultural shows.

***C. Recommendations of youth for the ASEAN+3 Heads of State/ Government regarding policy making to foster global citizenship and cultivate intercultural competence***

1. Acknowledge that governments are fundamental to the cause of global citizenship and intercultural competence. Government financial support and implementation of policy and mechanisms to be put into practice are vital in institutionalising projects and enacting policies formulated during meetings and dialogues;
2. Continue the support for existing platforms for intercultural exposure such as the ASEAN+3 youth caucuses and the AUN Educational Forum and Young Speakers Contest;
3. Establish an ASEAN+3 Student Union as an additional platform for youth to implement various trans-national projects concerning development of global citizenship and intercultural competence among other objectives;
4. Ensure that the youth (primary and secondary school students) have sufficient local and regional cultural knowledge; this may entail curriculum reform. Reform may include using critical pedagogical perspectives including, but not limited to, ethnicity (including minority and indigenous perspectives), religion and secularism, gender and sexuality, class, and disability;
5. Emphasise the need for schools to strengthen bilingual competency and to offer co-curricular options to learn additional languages, especially those of local ethnic groups;
6. Expand fast and reliable Internet access to ease information acquisition and cross-cultural communication;
7. Ease intra-regional mobility by expanding visa-free zones, and increasing the frequency and reach of air and sea routes between ASEAN+3 countries.
8. Increase resources available to practitioners conducting intercultural research and production in the arts; recognising the value in these productions as process-based and significant;
9. Enshrine mechanisms to build intercultural potential into future ASEAN treaties, such as the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration, with a view to protecting the diverse cultures of vulnerable populations within the region and beyond; and
10. Establish parameters and proxies by which to measure global citizenship knowledge and willingness of students to engage with others from ASEAN+3 universities thereby effectively assessing the success of such programs.

#### **IV. Closing**

The realisation of this joint statement will be accomplished through enhanced cooperation among the network of the ASEAN+3 students and relevant stakeholders. This joint statement will be submitted to the ASEAN+3 Senior Officials Meeting on Youth (SOMY) through the ASEAN Secretariat.

**Adopted** in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam the Twenty Ninth Day of June 2012

Acknowledged by:

The student participants of the 13<sup>th</sup> AUN Educational Forum and Young Speakers Contest.