



JOINT DECLARATION ON THE COMMON SPACE IN SOUTHEAST ASIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

WE, SEAMEO Member Countries and ASEAN Member States;

REAFFIRMING the Cha-Am Hua Hin Declaration on Strengthening Cooperation on Education to Achieve an ASEAN Caring and Sharing Community, adopted at Cha-Am Hua Hin Thailand on 24 October 2009;

ACKNOWLEDGING the principles adopted at the Declaration of ASEAN Concord II (Bali Concord II) in Bali, Indonesia on 7 October 2003 to establish the ASEAN Community by 2020;

RECALLING the 2015 Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the establishment of the ASEAN Community, the 2015 Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Higher Education, and the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, which established the ASEAN Community, acknowledged the important role of higher education in accelerating ASEAN Community-building and set the post-2015 ASEAN Community agenda towards realising a rules-based, people-oriented, people-centred ASEAN of “One Vision, One Identity, One Community”;

RECOGNISING the shared agenda of ASEAN and SEAMEO on harmonising higher education and research in the region as reflected in the ASEAN Work Plan on Education 2021-2025 and SEAMEO Education Agenda;

WELCOMING the progress made in implementing the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and acknowledging the ongoing work towards the ASEAN Community Vision 2045;

COMMENDING the ongoing efforts in implementing the ASEAN 5-Year Work Plan on Education 2021-2025 and the SEAMEO Strategic Plan 2021-2030;

STRESSING the importance of cooperation among ASEAN Member States towards the formation of the ASEAN Community and harmonising the higher education common space agenda of SEAMEO;

MINDFUL of the effects of climate change, the changes in societies, challenges in building shared peace, security, and prosperity across communities in Southeast Asia, and the need for transformation at regional and global levels.

DO HEREBY AGREE TO:

- i. Acknowledge the Common Space in Southeast Asian Higher Education as one of the catalysts in accelerating educational, economic, political and sociocultural development agendas;
- ii. Uphold quality in the provision of higher education across all ASEAN Member States and SEAMEO Member Countries;
- iii. Endeavour to enhance regional academic mobility in higher education through the Common Space in Southeast Asian Higher Education initiative;
- iv. Strengthen the solidarity of the ASEAN Community through enhanced higher education in person mobility of students, scholars and life-long learners;
- v. Contribute to the promotion of peace, prosperity, resilience, and vibrancy in Southeast Asia through synergised collaboration between ASEAN and SEAMEO and among academia, industry, government, community and partners in higher education;
- vi. Foster sustainable internationalisation through this joint declaration; and
- vii. Increase the visibility of ASEAN and SEAMEO globally through enhanced partnership and shared leadership in the Common Space in Southeast Asian Higher Education initiative.

Furthermore, we strive to support the vision, key principles and means of implementation in developing the Common Space in Southeast Asian Higher Education.

Our Vision

We envision the Common Space in Southeast Asian Higher Education as an inclusive space of collective intelligence in Higher Education for sustainable learning and living in Southeast Asia.

Key Principles

This future-oriented space will be based on principles of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB), as well as concerted efforts that support people-to-people connectivity and mobility, address the need for relevant skills, competencies, and credentials, and promote collective regional intelligence, knowledge production, and human development for peaceful and sustainable living in an ASEAN Community and Southeast Asian region.

Implementation

To achieve our vision, we aim to:

- i. Ensure a common framework is in place to provide a platform(s) for all stakeholders to be represented and contribute to shared values and goals which guide the development and enhance the quality of higher education in Southeast Asia;
- ii. Utilise existing mechanisms and key international and regional organisations on higher education development in Southeast Asia to provide policy recommendations.

WE acknowledge the above transformative aspirations, and this document serves as the guiding principle in promoting strong collaboration between ASEAN and SEAMEO and the broader higher education community.

WE TASK SEAMEO RIHED and the ASEAN Secretariat to oversee this Joint Declaration and report regularly to the SEAMEO High Officials Meeting (HOM) and ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Education (SOM-ED) on the progress of implementation.

ADOPTED in Buriram, Thailand on this Twenty-Fifth Day of August in the Year Two Thousand and Twenty-Four, in a single original copy, in the English Language.