



ЕВРОПЕЙСКИ ПАРЛАМЕНТ PARLAMENTO EUROPEO EVROPSKÝ PARLAMENT EUROPA-PARLAMENTET
EUROPÄISCHES PARLAMENT EUROOPA PARLAMENT ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΟ ΚΟΙΝΟΒΟΥΛΙΟ EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
PARLEMENT EUROPÉEN PARLAIMINT NA HEORPA PARLAMENTO EUROPEO EIROPAS PARLAMENTS
EUROPOS PARLAMENTAS EURÓPAI PARLAMENT IL-PARLAMENT EWROPEW EUROPEES PARLEMENT
PARLAMENT EUROPEJSKI PARLAMENTO EUROPEU PARLAMENTUL EUROPEAN
EURÓPSKY PARLAMENT EVROPSKI PARLAMENT EUROOPAN PARLAMENTTI EUROPAPARLAMENTET

Directorate-General for External Policies of the Union

**EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DELEGATION FOR RELATIONS WITH THE
COUNTRIES OF SOUTHEAST ASIA AND THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST
NATIONS (ASEAN)**



Introduction and summary of activities during the Parliamentary Term 2004-2009

General introduction

This delegation's remit covers relations with the ten countries of South-East Asia which are members of ASEAN (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam) and with ASEAN itself as an organisation. Every year the members of the delegation participate in a number of working missions to the region and receive visits from members of the national parliaments of the ASEAN countries. The European Parliament also has observer status at the ASEAN Inter-parliamentary Assembly (AIPA).

The inter-parliamentary delegations' main objective is to establish, channel and promote parliamentary dialogue with the partner countries' legislative institutions and also with the parliamentary institutions concerned with integration at regional or sub-regional level.

Such objectives are achieved by means of regular gatherings at Parliament's places of work and in the ASEAN region, during which topics of mutual interest in the national, bi-regional and international spheres are discussed.

After each inter-parliamentary meeting, the chairman of the delegation submits a report on the outcome of the meeting to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Development and the Committee on International Trade. Sometimes, these reports can give rise to European Parliament resolutions.

The ASEAN delegation holds regular meetings in Brussels and Strasbourg to examine matters such as the current social, economic and political situation relating to the region covered by the delegation. Meetings frequently focus on discussing matters of regional interest, such as the negotiations between the EU and the ASEAN countries on a Free Trade Agreement or regional integration, or otherwise to examine the situation in a given country, with political, diplomatic, trade-union or civil-society representatives from that country or region. An important interlocutor for the delegation is the European Commission representative. The responsible desk officer is normally invited to attend the meeting when matters relating to the respective country are being discussed.

The European Parliament's places of work are also the venues for inter-parliamentary meetings. Delegations from the ASEAN countries visit the European Parliament on a regular basis.

Concerning meetings outside Parliament's places of work...

As provided for in the implementing provisions governing the work of delegations, delegations that cover an entire region may divide themselves into working groups, since they cover a number of countries, and visit one or more during one mission. During the parliamentary term the delegations used to organise two or three working missions per year.

The programme for such visits generally include meetings with members of the executive and the legislative and of political parties, and with businessmen, trade unions and representatives of civil society, in particular organisations involved in protecting and

promoting human rights. The programmes also include working meetings with the accredited ambassadors of the EU Member States and visits to projects financed by the European Union. Delegations are generally received by the highest authorities of the country visited.

The annual programme of activities of each delegation is authorised by the Conference of Presidents. The state of affairs in certain countries or the political-dialogue commitments entered into by the two regions may lead the Conference of Presidents, however, to authorise specific missions in addition to those included in the annual programme. Ad hoc delegations are established, for instance, for electoral observations missions (ideally, these ad hoc delegations will include Members of the respective standing delegation). Ad hoc delegations are also established to attend the annual meetings of the ASEAN Inter-parliamentary Assembly (AIPA), at which the European Parliament has observer status. Ad hoc delegations are also authorised normally to attend the biennial Asia-Europe Parliamentary Partnership Meetings (ASEP), which take place before the respective Asia-Europe Meetings (ASEM), the main multilateral forum between Asia and Europe since 1996.

Chronology of activities during the 2004-2009 term

Date	Interparliamentary meetings (IPMs) Working groups	Inside EU	Outside EU
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2009

February	Bureau Visit to Thailand & 6 th EP/Indonesia & 6 th EP/Malaysia IPM		Bangkok, Jakarta, Banda Aceh, Kuala Lumpur
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2008

December	7 th EP/Vietnam IPM	Strasbourg	
September	28 th AIPA		Singapore
June	ASEP V		Beijing
April	5 th EP/Indonesia IPM	Strasbourg	
February	1 st EP/Cambodia IPM		Phnom Penh, Kampong Chnang, Pursat

2007

November	5 th EP/Philippines IPM		Manila / Davao
November	4 th EP/Indonesia IPM	Brussels	
September	28 th AIPA		Kuala Lumpur
March	5 th EP/Laos IPM		Vientiane / Luang Prabang

March	Working group to Thailand		Bangkok
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2006

November	3 rd EP/Indonesia IPM		Jakarta / Yogyakarta
September	27 th AIPO		Cebu
May	5 th EP/Vietnam IPM		Hanoi / Bac Can
May	ASEP IV		Helsinki
April	Ad hoc delegation to Cambodia		Phnom Penh

2005

November	5 th EP/ Malaysia IPM 7 th EP / Singapore IPM		Kuala Lumpur / Kuching Singapore
September	5 th EP/Thailand IPM 26 th AIPO		Bangkok / Doi Tung Vientiane
March	5 th EP/Vietnam IPM	Brussels	

2004

September	25 th AIPO		Phnom Penh
March	ASEP III & 4 th EP/Vietnam special meeting on human rights		Huê

Overview of the most important issues

Regional integration, EU-ASEAN trade relations and human rights have probably been the most important issues discussed with our ASEAN interlocutors, besides evaluating the specific political, social and economic situation of an individual country with the respective delegations. The impact of the international financial and economic crisis, climate change, food and energy security and terrorism have also been relevant matters of discussion.

The European Parliament has been able to witness considerable progress in ASEAN's regional integration during the previous term. The ASEAN Charter, adopted in 2007 and now in force, is an important step in its process of regional cooperation and integration. With this, ASEAN has now legal personality, and its institutions are further strengthened. The establishment of an Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) in July 2009 is one of the most outstanding developments and much welcomed by the EU. Ambassadors of EU Member States have been accredited to ASEAN and the Head of the European Commission's Delegation in Jakarta has been accredited as Representative to ASEAN (the

ASEAN secretariat is located in Jakarta). Members of the European Parliament's delegation for relations with ASEAN have followed these developments closely over the past few years and encouraged them. They are, to a certain extent, inspired by EU integration. An ambitious catalogue of cooperation measures between the EU and ASEAN has been adopted with the Nuremberg Declaration of 2007 and the Phnom Penh Agenda of May 2009. For the 2007-2013 period of the current financial perspectives, the EU has earmarked an amount of € 1.3 billion in development aid to South East Asian countries. In addition, € 70 million have been earmarked to support ASEAN's regional integration specifically.

EU-ASEAN trade relations have also been on top of the agenda. In May 2007, the EU and ASEAN agreed to launch negotiations on a comprehensive Free Trade Agreement, based on a region to region model. However, progress has been slow due to a number of elements, including the very heterogeneous character of ASEAN, which includes both very developed economies and developing countries. Although the perspective of achieving a region to region agreement remains an objective, the EU has envisaged moving ahead with negotiations on individual agreements with ASEAN Member States. The European Parliament's delegation has monitored progress closely, together with the responsible rapporteur in the Committee for International Trade.

Last but not least, it should be mentioned that the protection of human rights has also been an important point on the agenda of inter-parliamentary meetings with the respective ASEAN countries. In this context, the situation in Myanmar has also been of particular concern. The European Parliament has adopted a number of resolutions on Myanmar. This delegation has had the opportunity to discuss EU policy on Myanmar with ASEAN interlocutors and examine the approach of ASEAN countries to the matter, which to a great extent is marked by ASEAN's principle of non-interference.

Secretariat (as of September 2009)

Head of Unit: Mr Jean Louis BERTON	jeanlouis.berton@europarl.europa.eu
Administrator: Mr Walter MASUR	walter.masur@europarl.europa.eu
Assistant: Ms Claudia SCHWENDENWEIN	claudia.schwendenwein@europarl.europa.eu