



**42<sup>ND</sup> GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
ASEAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY  
Brunei Darussalam, 23-25 August 2021**

*Forging Parliamentary Cooperation in Digital Inclusion  
Towards ASEAN Community 2025*

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*(Res 42GA/2021/Eco/x)*

**DRAFT RESOLUTION ON  
PROMOTING INCLUSIVE DIGITAL ASEAN TO EMPOWER MSMEs  
AND STRENGTHEN THE ASEAN ECONOMIC INTEGRATION  
*(Jointly proposed by Brunei Darussalam and Malaysia)***

***The Forty-Second AIPA General Assembly:***

***Recalling*** the AIPA Resolution Res39GA/2018/Econ/03 on “*Deepening Regional Economic Integration in ASEAN*”, the AIPA Resolution Res 40GA/2019/ECO/01 “*Fostering Inclusive Development in ASEAN*”, and the AIPA Resolution RES.40GA/2019/ECO/03 on “*Resolution on Improving Digital Connectivity to Support the Growth of MSMEs*”, adopted at the 38<sup>th</sup>, 39<sup>th</sup> and 40<sup>th</sup> AIPA General Assembly respectively, in which the importance of having digital connectivity as one of the contributing factors to the acceleration of the ASEAN Economic Integration and in particular the rise of MSMEs, is highlighted;

***Further recalling*** the AIPA Resolution Res41GA/2020/Eco/01 on “*The Role of Parliaments in Promoting ASEAN Cohesiveness and Economic Recovery Post Covid-19*”, that affirms the important role plays by digital technology in strengthening ASEAN economic connectivity and ASEAN readiness to respond to challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic;

***Acknowledging*** the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint 2025 which aims to create a deeply integrated and highly cohesive ASEAN economy that would engender a more equitable and inclusive economic growth and support sustained high economic resilience even during global economic shocks and volatilities, as well as to propel ASEAN towards a digitally-enabled economy that is secure, sustainable and transformative and to further leverage ICT to enable an innovative, inclusive and integrated ASEAN;

***Further acknowledging*** the signing of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) as ASEAN Member States (AMS) effort towards creating better economic integration and inclusiveness in the region;

***Mindful*** of the impact of COVID-19 pandemic to the economic development and integration within the ASEAN region in addition to the direct disruption of the financial market, market

and supply chain as well as the vulnerable sectors for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs);

**Welcoming** the result of the 1<sup>st</sup> ASEAN Digital Ministers Meeting and Related Meetings in January 2021 that stressed out the importance of accelerating inclusive digital transformation in ASEAN, which is one of the key strategies adopted under ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF) and its Implementation Plan, that serves as a consolidated exit strategy from the COVID-19 crisis;

**Emphasizing** the importance of MSMEs as the backbone of ASEAN's diverse and dynamic economy that contributes significantly to economic growth even when MSMEs are still left behind in terms of digital connectivity and hence the development on MSMEs capabilities and networking, including to promote MSME digital upskilling to encourage the usage of digital technologies which will enable them to achieve significant uplift in productivity; efficiency; and market expansion within the region, as identified in the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF) and the ASEAN Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2016-2025, must be supported to avoid negative impact to MSMEs businesses that could further hinder the growth of ASEAN economy;

**Further emphasizing** the priority areas identified in the ASEAN Digital Integration Framework Action Plan (DIFAP) 2019-2025, which is to facilitate seamless trade, to protect data while supporting digital trade and innovation, to enable seamless digital payments, to broaden digital talent base, to foster entrepreneurship and to coordinate action must be in place to assist the acceleration of digital integration within ASEAN;

**Hereby resolves to:**

**Call upon** AIPA Member Parliaments to encourage AMS to prioritize connectivity, regional integration and narrowing the development gap among AMS in a coordinate approach to achieve the objectives of the fourth industrial revolution and closer sectoral integration;

**Call for** acceleration of digital integration by further enhancing the digital infrastructure needed to support the increasing demand for digital connectivity in the region by means of effective prioritization, coordination, and tracking across multiple destinations and timelines, including developing or amending existing domestic regulations that support the objectives of ASEAN economic integration through digital connectivity and inclusion;

**Encourage** AIPA Member Parliaments to promote digital economy and transformation as the way forward of doing business for the MSMEs to provide better opportunities and overcome the effect of economic disruptions due to COVID-19 pandemic by strengthening their governments in delivering financial support and working with business sector to support the regional digital trade connectivity initiated by ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ASEAN-BAC) in order to increase ASEAN trade and support the development of MSMEs;

***Strongly advice*** the exploration of potential partnerships among ASEAN Member States and AIPA Member Parliaments to promote excellence, innovation and productivity; facilitate and enhance market access and internationalization of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs); as well as to promote entrepreneurship and human capital development to create a thriving economic environment in ASEAN.

Adopted on the twenty fifth day of August two thousand twenty one in Brunei Darussalam.

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