



Discussion Report Talking ASEAN

on

Welcoming Timor-Leste to ASEAN:
Opportunities, Challenges, and Strategic Implications

Jakarta, 11 December 2025



Introduction

On Thursday, 11 December 2025, The Habibie Center convened a Talking ASEAN seminar entitled “**Welcoming Timor-Leste to ASEAN: Opportunities, Challenges, and Strategic Implications.**” The seminar featured **H.E. Joaquim da Fonseca** (Secretary General, RENETIL, and Ambassador of Timor-Leste to the United Nations (2009-2013) and the United Kingdom (2013-2019)), **Prof. Anders Uhlén** (Professor, Department of Political Science, Lund University, Sweden), and **Dinna Prapto Raharja, Ph.D.** (Executive Director and Co-Founder, Synergy Policies). The discussion was moderated by **Marina Ika Sari** (Researcher, ASEAN Studies Program, The Habibie Center).

The objectives of the seminar were to: (a) identify Timor-Leste’s opportunities and challenges following its accession to ASEAN; (b) discuss the key implications and potential outcomes of Timor-Leste’s admission for Timor-Leste, other ASEAN Member States (AMS), and ASEAN as an institution; and (c) provide actionable recommendations for ASEAN and its external partners to support Timor-Leste in strengthening its capacity as a new ASEAN member.

This discussion report summarizes each speaker’s key points and the following questions-and-answers session.

PRESENTATION FROM THE PANELIST



H.E. Joaquim da Fonseca

Secretary General, RENETIL, and Ambassador of
Timor-Leste to the United Nations (2009-2013) and
the United Kingdom (2013-2019)



H.E. Joaquim da Fonseca opened his session by revisiting the key timeline of Timor-Leste's accession to ASEAN, which he referred to as a '14-Year Diplomatic Odyssey'. In 2011, the country submitted its application, which then was accepted in principle in 2022, followed by the adoption of a roadmap in 2023. Finally, under Malaysia's Chairmanship in October 2025, Timor-Leste's full ASEAN membership was approved. The government of Timor-Leste has also undertaken substantial efforts to streamline its accession processes, including revising more than 30 laws in conformity with ASEAN legal frameworks as well as committing an annual contribution of US\$400,000 to the ASEAN Secretariat.

Ambassador Fonseca mentioned key expectations underlying Timor-Leste's tireless efforts to join ASEAN. First, he highlighted the anticipated economic benefits. Despite having a relatively small population of approximately 1.3 million, Timor-Leste aspires to tap into

the ASEAN market of around 680 million consumers by leveraging the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA), under which export tariffs can be eliminated and import tariffs reduced. This, in turn, could help lower the cost of living, allowing excess household income to be redirected toward more productive endeavours. However, Ambassador Fonseca emphasized that certain government safeguards still need to be put in place to avoid dependency, including measures to protect domestic industries and strengthen productive capacity. Currently, Timor-Leste still imports up to 60% of its consumer goods, underscoring the importance of carefully managing trade liberalization. Second, the regional cumulation opportunity. Other than the primary industry, the secondary industry was basically non-existent due to the high cost of importation for input materials, which translates to a high cost of production. With Timor-Leste's accession to ASEAN, policymakers can now paint a scenario where the country will be part of the regional supply chain through designing a special economic zone in one of its municipalities with embedded fiscal and non-fiscal incentives to attract foreign direct investment (FDI) flows from ASEAN member states (AMS).

Although the economic benefits have been identified, Ambassador Fonseca highlighted several inherent bottlenecks. First, connectivity. Timor-Leste remains isolated from regional trade networks due to underinvestment in infrastructure development. Despite maintaining a relatively neutral foreign policy



posture, China has dominated Timor-Leste's infrastructure development through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), while in the security realm, Timor-Leste has maintained close security engagements with Australia and the United States (US). Given this configuration, Ambassador Fonseca stated that Timor-Leste's new status as a full AMS opens opportunities for cooperation with all parties, both in economic and defense sectors, underscoring Timor-Leste's commitment to ASEAN centrality and the bloc's neutrality amid rising geopolitical dichotomies.

Another structural challenge, according to Ambassador Fonseca, is the 'fake investor pathology' or the 'Ali Baba' rent-seeking cycle, in which investment incentives are exploited by foreign entities without meaningfully contributing to the host countries' economies, hereinafter also referred to as 'briefcase companies'. He explained how the cycle normally works. It starts when a foreign broker engages with a 'local sleeping partner' to elicit legal access and official investor status in order to obtain fiscal and non-fiscal incentives. Rather than being involved in real production activities, the entity shifts to rent-seeking activities, such as bidding for government contracts. The results are foregone fiscal revenue, limited industrial upgrading, minimal domestic linkages, weakened domestic firms, and broader market distortion. Ultimately, the activity normally leads to capital flight when profits acquired are transferred overseas instead of being redirected to greenfield FDI in the host country.

The next structural challenge is the 'Turnkey Trap', which highlights the labour paradox in development policy. Imported labour and technology are often used in the development of large infrastructure and sectoral projects (construction and agriculture), resulting in built physical assets, but limited knowledge and skills transfer to the local workforce. On the flip side of a coin, driven by limited employment opportunities at home, Timorese youth migrate abroad, notably to Australia and South Korea, for low-skilled and seasonal jobs. This phenomenon can lead to a 'hollow state' issue where infrastructure exists, but human capital remains underdeveloped, further underscoring the weak linkage between investment and human capital development. In the long run, this could be an issue. Ambassador Fonseca stressed that development models that exclude the indigenous majority from value creation can lead to long-term social and economic instability by drawing a parallel from Colonial Fiji as a historical warning.

Strategic Roadmap for Success

The Modernization Checklist



Given these challenges, Ambassador Fonseca presented a strategic roadmap consisting of four strategies. First, dismantling rent-seeking by establishing a beneficial ownership registry to improve governance and investment quality, ensuring that investments create real value for local economies. Second, fixing the agricultural sector by shifting policy priorities from capital-intensive hardware toward skills training and knowledge spillovers, as 70–80% of Timorese rely on the agricultural sector. Third, enforcing local content requirements and regulating the use of foreign workers, limiting them to areas where local expertise remains insufficient. Lastly, pursuing digital leapfrogging by leveraging the implementation of the ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA).

PRESENTATION FROM THE PANELIST



Prof. Anders Uhlin
Professor, Department of Political Science,
Lund University, Sweden



Prof. Anders Uhlin started his session by recalling a statement from the Timor-Leste President, José Ramos-Horta, that “sometimes the path to ASEAN feels more difficult than the path to heaven”, highlighting the lengthy processes and the delay of Timor-Leste’s accession to ASEAN. He noted that Timor-Leste’s engagements with ASEAN have a long history, dating back to 1975, following the Fretilin (Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor or *Frente Revolucionária de Timor-Leste Independente*) declaration of independence from Portuguese occupation, they have shown an interest to be part of ASEAN. However, the shared views by AMS during the Cold War period considered Timor-Leste as a communist threat and were inclined to support Indonesia’s occupation. ASEAN’s support continued despite an increased international criticism of Indonesia following the Dili massacre in 1991.

At the people-to-people level, however, there was some sense of regional integration as evidenced by solidarity movements emerging between the Indonesian democracy movement groups and the East Timor independence activists along with the wider Asia-Pacific Coalition on East Timor. The fall of President Soeharto paved the way for independence for Timor-Leste, with some AMS, such as Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand, contributing peacekeepers. ASEAN accepted Timor-Leste’s independence in 2002. Since then, Timor-Leste has shown keen interest in participating in the ASEAN-led mechanisms, as evidenced by its membership in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in 2005 and signing the ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) in 2007. In 2011, Timor-Leste formally applied for ASEAN membership and met official requirements in 2014. After more than a decade, in 2022, ASEAN agreed in principle to admit Timor-Leste as its new member and granted an observer status. Under Malaysia’s ASEAN Chairmanship, the full membership of Timor-Leste was given on 26 October 2025. Prof. Uhlin assessed that in comparison to previous newly AMS’ admissions in the 1990s, Timor-Leste has a longer and more complicated process.

According to Prof. Uhlin, Timor-Leste’s delayed membership was driven by several factors. Despite strong support from Indonesia, the Philippines, and Malaysia, a number of AMS, particularly Singapore, Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Myanmar, were initially reluctant to admit

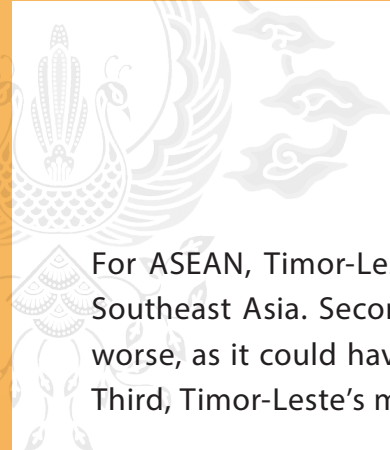


Timor-Leste. The main concern centered on socio-economic capacity. Timor-Leste is classified as a least developed country (LDC) and ranked 142nd in the 2023 Human Development Index (HDI) with a score of 0.634, far below Singapore's 13th position with a score of 0.946. This disparity was perceived as an additional burden for ASEAN, which already faces internal development gaps, as seen in Lao PDR and Myanmar, with HDI scores of 0.617 and 0.609, respectively.

Another factor is political reasons. The membership enlargement would further complicate ASEAN's consensus-based decision-making process. For Myanmar especially, Timor-Leste's leaders have consistently been very critical of human rights atrocities committed by the military government. Prof. Uhlin argued that the delay demonstrated ASEAN's institutional limitations in terms of its consensus decision-making. Additionally, from the V-Dem Liberal Democracy Index 2024, Timor-Leste performed better than the other 10 AMS as it

ranked 54th and was classified as an 'electoral democracy'. While Indonesia, despite being widely recognized as the world's third-largest democracy by population, only ranked 94th with an 'electoral autocracy' classification. Prof. Uhlin projected that Timor-Leste's membership in ASEAN might have implications for regional political dynamics, particularly in the area of democracy and human rights.

Prof. Uhlin also mentioned three values that Timor-Leste could gain from its ASEAN membership. First, access to a thriving regional market with lower export tariffs and high-quality imported products at competitive prices. Second, peace and stability can be further strengthened by leveraging ASEAN's established frameworks and mechanisms should confrontation with neighboring countries emerge. Third, ASEAN membership can be recognized as Timor-Leste's achievement since independence, since it marks the country's formal acceptance into an established regional organization.



For ASEAN, Timor-Leste's membership completes the 'family' as it is geographically located in Southeast Asia. Second, its membership will benefit ASEAN, as the alternative could have been worse, as it could have aligned with external powers seeking to influence the region's direction. Third, Timor-Leste's membership could boost ASEAN's legitimacy internally and externally.

As a conclusion, Prof. Uhlin stressed the importance of substantial support for developing Timor-Leste's human capital and infrastructure in order to fully participate in ASEAN, especially should it assume the ASEAN Chairmanship in 2029. Secondly, Timor-Leste's economic integration into ASEAN must be gradual to safeguard Timor-Leste's domestic industries. Lastly, Timor-Leste could play a constructive role in addressing the Myanmar issue, which could strengthen the region's democracy and human rights profile, thereby enhancing the bloc's overall legitimacy.

PRESENTATION FROM THE PANELIST



Dinna Prapto Raharja, Ph.D.
Executive Director and Co-Founder
Synergy Policies



Dinna Prpto Raharja, Ph.D., commenced her session by highlighting key identities of Timor-Leste that are valuable to ASEAN. First, Timor-Leste's identity as a democratic country. As democracy is anchored in the people, she suggested three mechanisms through which Timor-Leste could elevate issues that directly affect its people. First, by engaging more actively with ASEAN's government-to-government (G2G) tracks and human rights-focused agencies, such as the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) and the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC). Second, by safeguarding the right to mobility, particularly amid the global rise of anti-migrant sentiment and racism. Third, by engaging in capacity-building in disaster

relief, as climate change-induced disasters are becoming more frequent and severe.

The second characteristic of Timor-Leste is as a maritime country, although the identity remains relatively weak. To strengthen this identity, ASEAN can work with Timor-Leste to advance the implementation of the ASEAN Blue Economy Framework 2023, despite requiring enhancement at both the substance and execution of policies by engaging stakeholders such as political and social scientists, as well as economists, to help transform public mindsets toward ocean sustainability. Joint initiatives, particularly in conservation management, are encouraged bilaterally, such as through co-hosting blue economy-related activities.

Dr. Dinna also noted several challenges related to Timor-Leste's recent accession to ASEAN. Timor-Leste's financial and human resource capacity to host the hundreds of ASEAN meetings held annually remains limited. The country's meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions (MICE) industry and public amenities require further enhancement. To address this challenge, Dr. Dinna noted that Indonesia has expressed readiness to support Timor-Leste with manpower and logistical assistance. Moreover, the

number of diplomats and government officials with the required expertise in Timor-Leste remains relatively limited compared to the breadth of ASEAN's agenda. She therefore suggested that Timor-Leste focus on a few priority or 'champion' issues and co-host related initiatives with other AMS.

On the geopolitical dimension, Dr. Dinna argued that prevailing narratives on US-China rivalry are often overly US-centric. She noted that issues amplified in mainstream media do not necessarily reflect ASEAN's primary concerns. For example, while there is a recurring narrative that China intends to take over Taiwan by its centenary, Dr. Dinna pointed out that such a scenario is unlikely unless provoked.

Regarding strategic implications, Dr. Dinna highlighted three key aspects. First, the importance of people-oriented and people-centered policies. Timor-Leste has undertaken reforms in areas such as education and healthcare;

however, these reforms must be guided by appropriate models and benchmarks. In particular, she stressed the role of fiscal policy in financing and sustaining public amenities and advocated for an embedded system in which citizens could gain access by contributing to the system itself. Second, Dr. Dinna addressed the growing interest in nuclear power plants as an alternative energy source to reduce carbon emissions. She raised the critical question of how ASEAN can ensure the responsible and safe use of nuclear energy so that it benefits the people of the region. Lastly, she cautioned against the growing normalization of pre-emptive security doctrines. Dr. Dinna observed that defense and security threats are increasingly exaggerated to justify higher military spending, often at the expense of essential sectors such as education and healthcare. She warned that this trend could have a domino effect across AMS and urged ASEAN to avoid embracing pre-emptive strike norms, which could undermine regional stability.





QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION



Questions

Mabda Haerunnisa Fajrilla Sidiq (Researcher, The Habibie Center):

In terms of a constructive role that Timor-Leste could play in the Myanmar crisis, in what ways would that fill existing gaps in the roles that have been performed by other AMS? For instance, during its ASEAN chairmanship, Indonesia has pursued quiet diplomacy to build trust and seek solutions by engaging with all conflicting parties in Myanmar. How would the mediating or brokering role enacted by Timor-Leste differ from, or add value to, the previous efforts made by other AMS?

Responses

Prof. Anders Uhlin (Professor, Department of Political Science, Lund University, Sweden):

The Myanmar issue and its associated human rights abuses are indeed highly complex and can be considered one of ASEAN's most persistent challenges since the 1990s. The current situation reflects a stalemate between the democratic opposition and the Myanmar military forces, the Tatmadaw, which controls approximately 30% of the territory. In this sense, the military coup in 2021 can be viewed as a failed coup, as the Tatmadaw does not control the majority of the country's territory. The situation has become even more complicated due to the involvement of various ethnic militias and armed groups. For any sustainable peace to be achieved, dialogue must involve all warring parties.

In terms of where power lies among the different actors, the key priority should be to strengthen the democratic opposition and those advocating for a federal democratic system in Myanmar. ASEAN's approaches in this regard have been inadequate. Although junta leaders have been excluded from ASEAN summits, foreign ministers' meetings, and other high-level ASEAN forums, these measures alone have not been sufficient.

It is evident that representatives of Timor-Leste have been more outspoken in criticizing the Myanmar military. What is needed is stronger engagement with opposition groups, particularly the National Unity Government (NUG), and Timor-Leste could contribute meaningfully by building these connections. Increased pressure on the Tatmadaw is necessary, and this pressure could be reinforced by Timor-Leste in support of the shared concerns expressed by other AMS. The risk of inaction is tantamount to permissiveness toward continued violence, potential genocide, and prolonged stalemate, all of which continue to undermine ASEAN's legitimacy.




Dinna Prapto Raharja, Ph.D. (Executive Director and Co-Founder, Synergy Policies):

Since the Myanmar crisis escalated in 2012, a major gap has been the lack of systematic research on conditions on the ground. Much of the analysis available to international relations scholars focuses on elevating the issue to ASEAN forums, rather than understanding local realities. However, the Myanmar crisis cannot be resolved by relying solely on ASEAN's existing mechanisms. More creative and context-sensitive approaches are required if Myanmar is to return to peace, stability, and prosperity. ASEAN's response since the 2021 coup has been notably sluggish. The ASEAN Leaders' Meeting held shortly after the coup was widely perceived as falling short of public expectations. This was partly due to persistent doubts among ASEAN leaders about the organization's relevance, as the crisis continued to be framed as a domestic issue. As such, greater emphasis must be placed on articulating how the crisis directly affects people on the ground. Indonesia, in particular, is well-positioned to play a more vocal role in highlighting these impacts at the regional level.

The prolonged conflict has contributed to the emergence of ungoverned territories within ASEAN. Areas such as Myawaddy have become hotspots for transnational crimes, including cross-border scam operations and human trafficking. Weak governance by the Tatmadaw across large parts of Myanmar has increased the risk of expanding lawless spaces in which illicit activities thrive. This situation stands in stark contrast to Yangon, where daily life appears relatively stable and diplomatic engagements continue. The uneven distribution of governance across Myanmar disproportionately harms local communities living in conflict-affected areas.

ASEAN has yet to seriously engage in discussions on a future political governance model for Myanmar, which is currently fragmented among ethnic armed organizations, militias, the military junta (Tatmadaw), and the shadow NUG. This omission is critical, as any future cooperation with external partners will depend on clarity regarding legitimate political representation. Without addressing this question, it remains unclear which actors should be included in dialogue-based conflict resolution efforts. AMS could help facilitate discussions on cooperative models in a context where weapons circulation remains largely uncontrolled. Moreover, rent-seeking practices, despite being widespread, receive limited attention. Sustainable democracy and peace are unlikely when economic activity remains dominated by these activities.

At the G2G level, ASEAN responses have also varied. Not all AMS maintain ambassadorial representation in Myanmar. Indonesia, for example, has appointed a Chargé d'Affaires rather than an ambassador, signaling caution toward recognizing the Tatmadaw as Myanmar's legitimate authority. Other AMS, such as Singapore and Viet Nam, have retained their ambassadors, allowing their tenures to lapse beyond official terms, to avoid credential submission to the military regime. These approaches demonstrate alternative diplomatic tools for exerting pressure.



Regarding engagement with the NUG, as suggested by Prof. Uhlin, it is important to note that the NUG remains predominantly Bamar-led, with mixed grassroots acceptance. Addressing the Myanmar Crisis, therefore, requires tailored and nuanced approaches to break the current stalemate.

H.E. Joaquim da Fonseca (Secretary General, RENETIL, and Ambassador of Timor-Leste to the United Nations (2009-2013) and the United Kingdom (2013-2019)):

Timor-Leste can contribute to ASEAN in five main ways. First, from a defense and security perspective, Timor-Leste's full membership allows ASEAN to effectively secure its southern flank in the Timor Sea. ASEAN can now claim that this strategic maritime flank is covered and managed from within the bloc. Second, Timor-Leste can serve as a double bridge. As part of the Lusophone world, a community of countries where Portuguese is an official language, Timor-Leste can complement ASEAN's existing external partnerships. In addition, Timor-Leste holds observer status in the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), positioning it as a bridge linking ASEAN and Pacific Island states. Third, Timor-Leste is currently in discussions with Australia regarding the multi-trillion-dollar joint development of the Greater Sunrise oil and gas field. In this context, Timor-Leste has invited AMS to participate in the project, with the aim of fostering joint ventures and deeper energy cooperation between ASEAN and Timor-Leste. Regarding Prof. Uhlin's observation on Timor-Leste's democratic identity, Timor-Leste can indeed strengthen ASEAN's democratic credentials. However, given ASEAN's consensus-based decision-making process, this may also pose a risk if Timor-Leste becomes overly vocal in critiquing the democratic practices of other AMS. Lastly, in terms of economic contribution, Timor-Leste has recently completed the development of a seaport in Timor Bay, with the ambition of contributing to regional economic dynamics, particularly as a new transshipment hub.

On the issue of Myanmar, recognizing the importance of trust-building and echoing Dr. Dinna's perspective, a holistic understanding of the situation is critical, especially given the limited access to information due to prolonged isolation. Timor-Leste's engagement should therefore focus on building trust with both the military and the democratic opposition. With respect to the latter, Ambassador Fonseca suggested that the democratic opposition should strengthen its credibility among other ethnic groups, given Myanmar's multi-ethnic composition, in order to enhance its leverage as a negotiating partner on par with the military junta.

A fundamental question that AMS should pose to both the opposition and the military (Tatmadaw) is what kind of Myanmar they envision after the conflict, regardless of the civil war's eventual outcome. Drawing from Timor-Leste's own experience, the country aspired to become a peaceful and inclusive state, as reflected in its decision in 1998 to rename the National Council for Maubere Resistance to the National Council for Timorese Resistance, signaling a more inclusive national movement.



Questions

Seonyoung Yang (Korean Mission to ASEAN):

What roles can ASEAN's dialogue partners play in socializing Timor-Leste with ASEAN's mechanisms and modes of interaction in order to enhance its visibility and capacity to contribute meaningfully to the bloc?

Rena Huang (Taipei Economic and Trade Office, Jakarta):

Given ASEAN and Taiwan's recent focus on digital governance and emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and semiconductors, what roles might Taiwan, ASEAN dialogue partners, and global partners play in collaborating with Timor-Leste to enhance its digital governance and capacity to build technological infrastructure in support of Timor-Leste's digital and technology sectors?

Responses

Dinna Prapto Raharja, Ph.D. (Executive Director and Co-Founder, Synergy Policies):

Investment today can flow into poorly governed areas provided that investment protection is guaranteed by local authorities, including rent-seekers. It is therefore critical to consider mechanisms that connect the global and local levels to avoid what Ambassador Fonseca described as the 'briefcase model' of investment, a phenomenon that is presumably widespread in Myanmar. Moreover, some AMS are benefiting from ungoverned territories characterized by rent-seeking activities. In the context of Timor-Leste, the key question is: once the country opens itself to investment and economic cooperation with AMS and ASEAN's dialogue partners, how can it ensure that such investments create positive spillovers for its people, rather than becoming another example of one-sided, zero-sum cooperation?

The level of education in Timor-Leste is relatively low compared to other AMS. For instance, the average length of schooling in Indonesia is approximately less than 10 years or junior high school levels according to the country's Statistic Agency. Before investing in high-tech sectors, the fundamental question is how to improve the quality of education and school participation in Timor-Leste. Given that public infrastructure remains limited in Timor-Leste, AMS and external partners can tap into public sector investment to help ensure a more equitable distribution of benefits and opportunities for all Timorese.



H.E. Joaquim da Fonseca (Secretary General, RNETIL, and Ambassador of Timor-Leste to the United Nations (2009-2013) and the United Kingdom (2013-2019)):

External entities can play a supportive role, particularly through the provision of technical training for civil servants and other policy enablers in Timor-Leste. This is among the areas where foreign missions can contribute to assisting Timor-Leste to function more effectively within ASEAN. Given that the overall level of education in Timor-Leste remains limited, which results in constrained technical capacities, support should be implemented through step-by-step processes and aligned with priority areas identified by line ministries to ensure more targeted and effective programs.

Prof. Anders Uhlin (Professor, Department of Political Science, Lund University, Sweden):

Timor-Leste faces three major challenges. First, based on the HDI, Timor-Leste lags behind other AMS, reflecting persistent structural and economic challenges. This underscores the urgent need for economic diversification, particularly amid escalating climate crises. Continued reliance on fossil fuel-based extractive industries as the backbone of the national economy would be increasingly unsustainable. In this regard, Timor-Leste's ASEAN membership could help reduce its dependence on extractive sectors by opening pathways toward more diversified and resilient economic development.

Second, the development of both soft and hard infrastructures should be prioritized. While several initiatives already exist, such as capacity-building programs conducted by Universitas Gadjah Mada for Timorese participants, greater and more systematic efforts are needed. In preparation for its ASEAN Chairmanship in 2029, the remaining four years might present a considerable challenge. One possible solution is a shared chairmanship arrangement with neighboring countries, particularly Indonesia.

Lastly, human rights issues present a delicate balancing act for Timor-Leste. While the country has been vocal and progressive in advocating for human rights, aligning this stance with ASEAN's consensus-based decision-making mechanisms may prove challenging. Nevertheless, human rights activists attending the ASEAN People's Forum and the ASEAN Civil Society Conference in Kuala Lumpur this year have expressed strong hopes that Timor-Leste's full ASEAN membership will add value to ASEAN's intergovernmental dialogues and policy processes.



ABOUT ASEAN STUDIES PROGRAM

The ASEAN Studies Program was established on February 24, 2010, to become a center of excellence on ASEAN related issues, which can assist in the development of the ASEAN Community by 2015. The Habibie Center through its ASEAN Studies Program, alongside other institutions working towards the same goal, hopes to contribute to the realization of a more people-oriented ASEAN that puts a high value on democracy and human rights.

The objective of the ASEAN Studies Program is not merely only to conduct research and discussion within academic and government circles, but also to strengthen public awareness by forming a strong network of civil society in the region that will be able to help spread the ASEAN message. With the establishment of ASEAN Studies Program, The Habibie Center aims to play its part within our capabilities to the ASEAN regional development.

ABOUT TALKING ASEAN

Talking ASEAN is a monthly public dialogue held at The Habibie Center in Jakarta. Covering a wide array of issues related to ASEAN, Talking ASEAN addresses topics of: Economic Integration, Socio-cultural, & Democracy, human rights and regional peace, among others. Featuring local and visiting experts, Talking ASEAN is one of a series of twelve dialogues regularly held each month and open to a target audience consisting of ASEAN officials, foreign ambassadors & diplomats, academics, university students, businesses, and the media.

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