

Message From President

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Greetings!

Fiscal year (FY) 2017 was the year ERIA expanded the scope of its activities as it needed to help chart the future direction of ASEAN and East Asia. This is after the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in 2015 and looking forward to the 50th anniversary of the establishment of ASEAN.

A review of ERIA's deliverables for FY2017 reveals that ERIA widely expanded its field of activities to help clear the path for the economic integration and development of East Asia.

One such deliverable is the ASEAN@50 projects, comprising the five-volume publication commemorating ASEAN's 50th anniversary, and three public symposia and the High Level Forum co-organised with the Government of the Philippines. Volume 1 of the publication showcases the thoughts, experiences, and insights of Leaders, ministers, and high level officials of the 10 ASEAN member states on the retrospectives and perspectives on the making, substance, significance, and future of ASEAN. We hope this would be an excellent reference material to help present and future readers, especially the youth, to better understand ASEAN. The High Level Forum, in October 2017, was graced by H.E. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, former President of the Philippines, and H.E. Abhisit Vejjajiva, former Prime Minister of Thailand for the panel discussion. These two very articulate



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ASEAN Leaders demonstrated deep understanding and insights, and voiced thought-provoking ideas for an even better ASEAN. ERIA also invited HE Rodrigo Roa Duterte, President of the Philippines, to whom was presented the five-volume commemorative publication. In his keynote speech, President Duterte said, 'Together, let us cultivate our peoples' sense of ownership, for them to own the ASEAN story as their story and to see ASEAN's future as their own'.

On economic research, ERIA started developing the ASEAN Seamless Trade Facilitation Indicator (ASTFI) and conducted the assessment of the ASEAN–Australia–New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and ASEAN–Canada FTA. ERIA reported on these developments at the ASEAN Economic Ministers Meeting and its Related Meetings in September 2017. The ministers welcomed these developments and anticipated their completion. ERIA's newly established Policy Design Department also worked hard with high officials of member states to make these deliverables more concrete and actionable.

Another important field is energy-related issues. Out of 52 research projects that ERIA conducted, more than 20 are related to energy. ERIA first hosted the East Asia Energy Forum in August to which it invited researchers and specialists, including two energy ministers from the Philippines and Brunei Darussalam, to discuss the future of conventional energy in the East Asia region. The Bohol Reflection, which was launched as the summary and suggestions of this conference was mentioned in the East Asia summit statement and proposed the importance of utilising the conventional energy.

ERIA's fields are continuously expanding to include population ageing and long-term care, agriculture, environment disaster management, and political areas. On population ageing and long-term care, ERIA started the longitudinal survey on the elderly in Southeast Asia, the research on the development of career paths for returned long-term care migrants from Japan to Southeast Asia, and the estimation of demand and supply of health care personnel. In August 2017, ERIA co-hosted a multi-stakeholder forum. More than 100 parliamentarians from 32 countries were invited to this forum where they discussed how to cope with the rapidly ageing societies worldwide. On agriculture, ERIA has been studying the upgrading of the ASEAN food value chain. On the environment area, ERIA has started the research activities focusing on the development of waste management in ASEAN.

ERIA has also been cultivating good relations with the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA). Based on a memorandum of understanding, ERIA was officially invited to the General Assembly of AIPA in September 2017 in Manila. ERIA delegates attended the General Assembly and the Economic Committee during which an agreement was reached to co-host the capacity building workshop for regulatory management system and good regulatory practice of ASEAN Member States.

ERIA's efforts in 2017 continued to expand relentlessly, and received unabated recognition from regional leaders. They commended ERIA's continuous support through the Chairman's statements of various ASEAN and East Asian summits. At the 11th East Asia Summit, the Leaders encouraged ERIA to continue its support to the Chair of the ASEAN and East Asia summits. ERIA's activities were mentioned in 11 paragraphs of statements of the ASEAN Summit and related summits in 2017. ERIA was highlighted in independent ERIA chapters. On communication and outreach activities, ERIA's media coverage has been getting stronger and wider in scope. Major newspapers of each ASEAN Member State have been publishing an article or opinion editorial of an ERIA researcher at least once a week.

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We are proud of these achievements in 2017 but we will not be complacent. As ERIA celebrates its 10th anniversary in 2018, we will be more vigilant in helping address the challenges of deeper ASEAN economic integration and development in East Asia.



Prof. Hidetoshi Nishimura
President