

## Singapore

# *Consideration of the Status of Implementation of the 30<sup>th</sup> AIPA General Assembly Resolutions*

### **Introduction**

The Parliament of Singapore had informed Ministries/Govt Agencies of the resolutions adopted at the 30<sup>th</sup> AIPA General Assembly. Furthermore, Members of Parliament who attended the 30th AIPA General Assembly also raised pertinent issues and made recommendations at parliament sittings on AIPA/ASEAN matters.

### **Economic Matters** (Resolution on Global Economic and Financial Crisis)

3. Singapore introduced a slew of measures to mitigate the impact of the global economic downturn. In an unprecedented measure, the Singapore government unveiled a \$20.5 billion Resilience Package aimed at providing a significant fiscal boost to the economy. The main focus of the Resilience Package measures was on preserving employment for Singaporeans and assisting businesses. Some of the measures introduced were:

#### *(A) Enhancing credit schemes*

To stimulate bank lending and give businesses easier access to credit, the government has introduced or enhanced a number of credit schemes since November 2008

#### *(B) The Jobs Credit Scheme (JCS)*

The JCS aims to give businesses a significant incentive to preserve jobs in the downturn, by providing employers with a 12% cash grant on the first \$2,500 of each month's wages for each employee on their CPF payroll. In October 2009, the government extended the one-year scheme for 6 months with 2 payouts in March and June 2010 at stepped down rates. This was in view that the economy is stabilising and the government will adopt more targeted measures to support economic restructuring and enhance productivity. The scheme will officially cease after the final payment in June 2010.

#### *(C) Skills Programme for Upgrading and Resilience (SPUR)*

In November 2008, the government announced the new Skills Programme for Upgrading and Resilience (SPUR). SPUR is a two-year funding scheme developed by the tripartite partners - the government, employers and unions - to help workers remain employable, save jobs and strengthen individual / employer capabilities to prepare for the economic upturn. Through SPUR, workers have the opportunity to gain a competitive edge in the job market while employers are able to manage excess manpower, save manpower costs and retain workers by channeling them

for skills upgrading and development. Under this programme, workers can choose from over 1,000 courses ranging from healthcare, education, security, social services to tourism, made available until 30 November 2010.

#### **Social Matters** (Resolution on Disaster Management)

4. Singapore has actively participated in the ASEAN Regional Programme on Disaster Management (ARPDMD) to realize the goal of cooperation amongst ASEAN member states in disaster management by 2010. Singapore's direct involvement in the ARPDMD has been to provide assistance in the following areas:

##### *(A) Establishment of the ASEAN Response Action Plan*

One of the most significant achievements under this project is the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) which is a regional legal framework for promoting cooperation and collaboration in disaster risk reduction (DRR) and emergency response in the ASEAN region. AADMER came into force on 24 Dec 2009 and is the first legally binding, Hyogo Framework for Action(HFA)-related Agreement in the world.

As part of operationalising AADMER, Singapore has also been actively involved in the crafting of the Standard Operating Procedure for Regional Standby Arrangements and Coordination of Joint Disaster Relief and Emergency Response Operations (SASOP). It is near completion and once fully adopted, SASOP will provide a guide for Parties on disaster relief and emergency response.

The ASEAN regional disaster emergency response simulation exercise, ARDEX, has also been conducted annually since 2005 to validate SASOP and assess the humanitarian response of member states to a disaster-struck country. The location of ARDEX is rotated amongst the ASEAN member states and Singapore successfully conducted ARDEX in 2007.

##### *(B) Refresher Courses/ Expertise Development*

Singapore has offered a series of specialised training courses in this aspect and the Spore Civil Defence Force conducted 2 runs of the ASEAN Exercise Design Workshop on 7-11 May 2007 and 24-27 Feb 2009. The aim of the workshop is to equip participants with the knowledge and expertise to conduct large-scale, meaningful exercises, particularly to prepare for ARDEX.

##### *(C) ASEAN Disaster Information Sharing and Communication Network or ASEAN DISCNet*

ASEAN DISCNet project is undertaken by Philippines in collaboration with the Pacific Disaster Centre (PDC). Singapore, together with Cambodia and the ASEAN Secretariat, sits in the Technical Advisory Sub-Committee. One of the successes of the project is the establishment of ACDM website (acdm-online.net) in 2007. The website provides information on the ACDM, as well as links to the appropriate disaster management organisations from all the member states.

The Online Southeast Asia Disaster Inventory (OSADI) was also formed under the ambit of the DISCNet project ([www.pdc.org/osadi](http://www.pdc.org/osadi)). OSADI is a web-based disaster database that compiles historical records of disasters in ASEAN member states, hazard maps and other spatial disaster-related data.

**Political Matters** (Resolution on Interfaith Dialogue for Conflict Prevention and Resolutions)

5. Singapore has put in place institutional and legal frameworks to ensure that religious and racial groups in Singapore coexist in a harmonious and peaceful environment. Some of the measures introduced that promote interfaith dialogue are:

*(A) Maintenance of Religious Harmony Act*

The Maintenance of Religious Harmony Act empowers the Government to issue restraining orders and take other stern measures against individuals who intend to disrupt harmony between ethnic and religious communities.

*(B) Inter Religious Organisation*

The Inter Religious Organisation is an interfaith NGO in Singapore and has been very active in organising interfaith dialogues and exhibitions, and producing resource materials for the public to promote greater understanding between communities.

*(C) Community Engagement Programme*

The Community Engagement Programme (CEP) was established for community leaders to network and build understanding across groups. A key component of the CEP is the Inter Racial and Religious Confidence Circles (IRCCs) which drive programmes and initiatives that foster friendships and trust in peaceful years, which can counter the tensions and strains that social cohesion may face during times of crises.

**WAIPA Matters** (Resolution on the Empowerment of Women and Contribution of Women to Politics)

6. Singapore is committed to the advancement of women. Singapore acceded to the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1995 and further established an Inter-Ministry Committee on CEDAW, as women's issues cut across different Ministries and Govt agencies. The Singapore Government also partners private sector and NGO stakeholders to enhance women's participation in various fields.

7. In the field of politics, female representation in the Parliament of Singapore has been significantly increasing over the years and stands at 23.4% now. Singapore also appointed its first female cabinet minister in 2009. The Singapore Government is committed to provide an enabling environment to assist women and one manner in which this achieved is through education. Singapore has achieved a high literacy rate for women and female students make up more than half the student intake at local universities.

## ***Consideration of the Status of Implementation of the 30<sup>th</sup> AIPA General Assembly Resolutions - Singapore***

Mr Chairman,

Honourable Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Parliament of Singapore informs Ministries/Govt Agencies of the resolutions adopted at the AIPA General Assemblies. Furthermore, Members of Parliament who attended the AIPA General Assemblies also raise pertinent issues and make recommendations at parliament sittings on AIPA/ASEAN matters.

2. For resolutions passed at the 30<sup>th</sup> AIPA GA in Pattaya in 2009, I would like to highlight the following:

### **Economic Matters** (Resolution on Global Economic and Financial Crisis)

3. Singapore introduced a slew of measures to mitigate the impact of the global economic downturn. In an unprecedented measure, the Singapore Government unveiled a \$20.5 billion Resilience Package aimed at providing a significant fiscal boost to the economy. Some of the measures that were introduced pertained to enhancing credit schemes for businesses, introducing the Jobs Credit Scheme which gave businesses a significant incentive to preserve jobs in the downturn and introducing the Skills Programme for Upgrading and Resilience (SPUR) to help workers remain employable, save jobs and strengthen individual / employer capabilities to prepare for the economic upturn

### **Social Matters** (Resolution on Disaster Management)

4. Singapore has actively participated in the ASEAN Regional Programme on Disaster Management (ARPDm) to realize the goal of cooperation amongst ASEAN member states in disaster management by 2010. Some of Singapore's direct involvement in the ARPDm has been by assisting in the establishment of the ASEAN Response Action Plan and by providing specialized training courses in the area of disaster management.

### **Political Matters** (Resolution on Interfaith Dialogue for Conflict Prevention and Resolutions)

5. Singapore has put in place institutional and legal frameworks to ensure that religious and racial groups in Singapore coexist in a harmonious and peaceful environment. One such framework is the Community Engagement Programme which strives to foster trust and openness between different religious and racial communities.

**WAIPA Matters** (Resolution on the Empowerment of Women and Contribution of Women to Politics)

6. Singapore is committed to the advancement of women and the Singapore Government partners private sector and NGO stakeholders to enhance women's participation in various fields. In the field of politics, female representation in the Parliament of Singapore has been significantly increasing over the years and stands at 23.4% now. Singapore also appointed its first female cabinet minister in 2009.

Thank you