



**[DELIVERED]**

**CLOSING SESSION  
3<sup>RD</sup> CONSULTATIVE MEETING OF YPA**

**REMARKS**

**THEME:  
“ASEAN YOUTH: STRENGTHENING SOLIDARITY AND  
EMPOWERING FUTURE-READY LEADERS”**

**AIPA**  
By  
**AIPA SECRETARY-GENERAL**

**H.E. DR. CHEM WIDHYA**

**Honourable Chair, Honourable Parliamentarians, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. It has been my distinct privilege to have been able to join you throughout this 3rd Consultative Meeting of Young Parliamentarians of AIPA. As we now conclude our deliberations, allow me to express my highest appreciation for the active engagement and valuable contributions shared by all young parliamentarians and partners.
2. Throughout today's discussions, we were reminded that our region faces increasingly complex challenges. Yet amid these highly demanding circumstances, ASEAN's greatest strength remaining our solidarity and our ability to respond through national and collective resilience, mutual support, and shared purpose.
3. We were equally reminded that the youth of ASEAN are not only the leaders of tomorrow, but crucially important partners in shaping decisions today. As young parliamentarians, their leadership is essential in ensuring that policies remain people-centred, relevant to their needs, inclusive, and future-ready. Today's Meeting has reaffirmed the growing relevance of YPA as a platform to strengthen dialogue, share best practices and turn common aspirations into meaningful legislative action for the benefit of our peoples.

**Honourable Chair, Honourable Parliamentarians, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

4. Building on these reflections, allow me to acknowledge the best practices shared by young AIPA Member Parliaments and other esteemed participants throughout our discussions today. Delegations highlighted various efforts to strengthen meaningful youth participation in governance, including youth parliaments, consultative councils, civic education platforms, and other

structured avenues that enable young people to contribute more directly to policy formulation and decision-making.

5. Moreover, our meeting was particularly encouraged by the thoughtful recommendations put forward by delegations on preparing future-ready generations through investments in education, technical and vocational training, entrepreneurship, digital literacy, and skills development. Particular attention was also given to strengthening cooperation in addressing common challenges such as employment, mental health, climate change, food security, as well as the opportunities and risks arising from digital transformation. These exchanges reflected our shared understanding that empowering youth requires closer collaboration and solidarity among AIPA Member Parliaments.
6. At the regional level, we were pleased to note the steady progress of AIPA's ongoing efforts to elevate youth perspectives within regional parliamentary cooperation. Since the establishment of YPA as a Standing Committee, youth priorities have been increasingly reflected in AIPA's resolutions, implementation frameworks, and related youth initiatives. Reflections shared by Model AIPA participants also pointed to the value of alumni networks to sustain engagement and support continued collaboration among AIPA and ASEAN youth. This growing momentum reflects our collective achievements in ensuring that ASEAN youth shape the future of our Community.

### **Honourable Members of Parliament, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

7. The discussions of the first dialogue session delivered a clear message: the future of ASEAN's digital transformation will depend not only on access to technology, but on how effectively we equip young people with the skills, ethics, and opportunities to use it responsibly. It was highlighted that while ASEAN youth are growing up in an increasingly connected and digitally driven environment, gaps remain in digital literacy, institutional readiness, and equal

access. The session therefore underscored the need for parliaments to invest in education, innovation ecosystems, and youth-centred AI governance frameworks, ensuring that technology strengthens inclusion, resilience and shared prosperity across our region.

8. The second dialogue session likewise reaffirmed that mental health must be recognised not only as a public health concern, but as a governance and development priority with implications for education, employment, productivity, and social stability. Discussions highlighted the growing mental health burden among young people. Underinvestment, limited access to community-based support, resulted stigma continue to hinder effective responses. The session therefore called on parliaments to strengthen pertinent laws, sustainable financing, cross-sectoral coordination and preventive services to ensure that youth voices and perspectives are meaningfully integrated into policymaking.

**Honourable Chair, Honourable Parliamentarians, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

9. Although today's Meeting was held virtually, the level of engagement and the substance of our exchanges clearly reflect the resolve of ASEAN youth and of their young parliamentarians to take destiny into their own hands and advance the ASEAN Community Vision 2045. The discussions reaffirm that parliamentary cooperation continues to evolve and be agile with the evolving circumstances, while remaining grounded in dialogue, collaboration, active cooperation mutual respect, and a shared commitment to advancing the future of ASEAN youth.
10. May the spirit of solidarity and belonging reflected in this Meeting continue to guide the work of YPA, and may our collective efforts contribute meaningfully to a more inclusive, resilient future-ready and prosperous ASEAN Community living in peace and amity.

11. Thank you.

