



**[DELIVERED]**

**OPENING CEREMONY  
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**

***His Excellency Faustino "Bojie" G. Dy III, President of AIPA and Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Republic of the Philippines;***

***Honourable Maria Rachel J. Arenas, Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives and Senior Vice Chair, Special Committee on ASEAN Affairs and Chairperson of the Committee on Foreign Affairs;***

***Hon. Jonathan Clement "JC" M. Abalos II, Chairperson of Young Parliamentarians of AIPA;***

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

***Magandang umaga,***

1. It is with profound and sincere pleasure to have the privilege to address the Honourable Young Parliamentarian and other participants at the Opening Session of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Consultative Meeting of Young Parliamentarians of AIPA.
2. I would like to express my high appreciation to the House of Representatives of the Philippines for hosting this Meeting, and above all, for its steadfast commitment in ensuring continuity of work despite the necessary transition from an in-person participation to a virtual meeting.
3. Such dedication not only reflects the high importance that AIPA Member Parliaments attach to strengthening youth engagement within our regional parliamentary cooperation, but also underscores the resilience and adaptability that characterise AIPA's collective work.

***Your Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen, Honourable Parliamentarians,***

4. We meet at a time of increasing global uncertainty. Conflicts, tense geopolitical rivalries, fragile energy security, socio-economic pressures, climate-related risks and rapid technological developments reshape dramatically the fast evolving global landscape. These

developments are complex, interconnected, with implications that are felt across our region in different sectors and generations.

5. It is therefore timely that this Meeting is convened under the theme, ***“ASEAN Youth: Strengthening Solidarity and Empowering Future-Ready Leaders.”*** The theme aptly underscores the importance of fostering a stronger sense of regional solidarity among ASEAN youth, while at the same time empowering them with the awareness and knowledge, values and duty as well as with the capacities needed to contribute meaningfully to further strengthen our regional architecture.
6. Youth across ASEAN represents a significant share and the dynamic part of our population. They play a vital role in advancing economic, social, and civic development. Their active contributions across areas such as innovation, entrepreneurship, public life and climate action among others will determine the quality of our ASEAN Community in the years to come as reflected in the ACV 2045.
7. It is equally important to share experiences and opportunities available to young people across our region in a fair manner, helping those who continue to face constraints in accessing quality education, decent employment, digital connectivity, and meaningful avenues for participation in public life.
8. The rapid expansion of digital spaces has introduced more complex challenges. Alongside new opportunities for innovation and connectivity, young people are exposed to dis-information, online exploitation and the broader implications of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence. Concerns relating to mental health, social pressure and uncertainty about the future employment policies have gained tractions.
9. These realities remind us that the promise of youth empowerment must be matched by adequate policies and concerted efforts to ensure inclusion, and efficient support, bearing in mind the vital importance of integrating youth perspectives into parliamentary

processes and parliamentary diplomacy, shaping the aspirations of ASEAN's younger generation in policy discussions.

***Your Excellency Speaker, Honourable Parliamentarians, Ladies and Gentlemen,***

10. As AIPA's youngest Standing Committee, YPA has demonstrated a shared commitment to people-centred policies and to accountability to the people they represent and to the people of ASEAN as a whole.
11. This Consultative Meeting provides a valuable opportunity to advance these ideals in order to respond more effectively to the evolving needs and challenges of the future across our region.
12. Looking ahead, as ASEAN continues to evolve in an increasingly dynamic and challenging environment, solidarity shall remain essential foundation, one that enables our region to respond to challenges not in isolation, but through mutual support, collective resilience, and a strong commitment to equity and shared prosperity.
13. In this spirit, May I wish our meeting fruitful deliberations and meaningful exchanges.
14. Thank you.

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