



ASEAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

The 4th AIPA Caucus

30 April – 3 May 2012, Bangkok, Thailand

Report of the 4th AIPA Caucus

INTRODUCTION

1. The 4th ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) Caucus was held at the Imperial Queen's Park Hotel in Bangkok, Thailand on 30 April – 3 May 2012.
2. The meeting convened to discuss the progress made by each AIPA Member Country in implementing Resolutions adopted at the 32nd AIPA General Assembly in Cambodia in 2011.
3. The meeting also discussed the matter of Disaster Management in AIPA Member Countries and the Creation of an AIPA Core Group of Parliamentarians.

LIST OF DELEGATES

4. The 4th AIPA Caucus was attended by 26 delegates from 9 AIPA Member Countries and a representative from the ASEAN Secretariat. The full list of participants is attached as Annex A.

COURTESY CALL ON PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THAILAND

5. Leaders of the Delegations of the AIPA Caucus called on H.E. Mr. Somsak Kiatsuranont, President of the National Assembly of Thailand on Tuesday, 1st May 2012 at 08.00 hrs. The President welcomed the leaders of delegations of AIPA Caucus and noted that the 4th AIPA Caucus is another advance step for the legislative bodies of all ASEAN countries to become an ASEAN Community in 2015. However, to achieve that goal, everyone should join efforts in solving common problems and harmonizing the legislations concerned. He appointed Hon. Mr. Abhisit Vejjajiva, Leader of the Opposition in the House of Representatives and the Former Prime Minister of Thailand as the Chairman of the 4th AIPA Caucus. Then the leaders of the delegations took turns in sharing their views on the topic of the meeting "Disaster Management" which all envisaged that the matter is important to both disaster-affected and non disaster-affected countries. The AIPA Secretary-General also referred to the large number of resolutions adopted by many ASEAN, AIPA and other regional meetings in the past most of which have not yet been acted upon and they agreed to accelerate their implementation. Finally, they all look forward to the success of this meeting.

OFFICIAL OPENING CEREMONY

6. At the opening ceremony on Tuesday, 1st May 2012, H.E. Mr. Somsak Kiatsuranont, President of the National Assembly of Thailand, accorded a warm welcome to all participants and declared the meeting open. He addressed that AIPA and ASEAN are working closely together for the stability, prosperity and sustainable development of the region.
7. He highlighted that many adopted resolutions from previous General Assemblies have not been implemented. He also said that one of the primary concerns in ASEAN is disaster management. Since in recent years, many ASEAN countries suffered from natural disasters including Thailand, they have to be more concerned about the readiness in coping with any disasters effectively. He pointed out that ASEAN has established the regional mechanisms to manage disaster situations such as the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) and the ASEAN coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Center). In addition, the regional concrete measures for disaster management should be placed as an important issue. At the end of the speech, H.E. Mr. Somsak Kiatsuranont, noted that all relevant sectors in ASEAN Member Countries are now alerted to achieve the ASEAN Community in 2015. He emphasized that this is not only the responsibility for the Executive bodies, but the Legislative branches to be actively involved in building an ASEAN Community for its peoples.
8. The full text of H.E. Mr. Somsak Kiatsuranont, President of the Thai National Assembly's opening address is attached as Annex B.

FIRST SESSION

9. The first session of the 4th AIPA Caucus was chaired by Hon. Mr. Abhisit Vejjajiva, Leader of the Opposition in the House of Representatives and Former Prime Minister of Thailand on Tuesday, 1st May 2012 at 09.45 a.m.. The meeting considered and adopted the Agenda for the 4th AIPA Caucus (attached as Annex C) and the Programme of Activities (attached as Annex D).

Deputy Chairman of the 4th AIPA Caucus

10. In accordance with Article I (4) of the Terms of Reference of the AIPA Caucus, the Chairman of the 4th AIPA Caucus informed the meeting that Hon. Mr. Nguyen Manh Tien, Leader of the Vietnam Delegation has been appointed the Deputy Chairman of the 4th AIPA Caucus.

Secretary-General of AIPA as the Secretary of the 4th AIPA Caucus

11. In accordance with Article I (5) of the Terms of Reference of the AIPA Caucus, the Chairman of the 4th AIPA Caucus informed the meeting that Hon. Mr. Antonio Veloso Cuenco would serve as the Secretary-General of the 4th AIPA Caucus.

Consideration of the Status of Implementation of the 32nd AIPA General Assembly Resolutions

12. Each AIPA Delegation was invited to present their respective reports on the Status of Implementation of the 32nd AIPA General Assembly Resolutions.
13. AIPA Member countries informed the 4th AIPA Caucus that they had submitted the 32nd AIPA General Assembly Resolutions to their respective governments for their information and action.
14. The reports on the Status of Implementation of the 32nd AIPA General Assembly Resolutions by each AIPA Member Country are attached as Annex E.

Disaster Management Presentation of Country Reports

15. The meeting noted that the Country Reports on Disaster Management of all AIPA Member Countries and the ASEAN Secretariat are attached in Annex F and the summary tables containing each country's initiatives on Disaster Management are attached as Annex G.
16. The ASEAN Secretariat representative noted that disasters in the ASEAN region are a threat to efforts to improve the livelihoods of its peoples. ASEAN needs to work together to deal with disasters swiftly, and try to contain the damage. He gave examples of regional cooperation on the issue of disaster management, namely, the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) and the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM). He also presented that the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) had worked for ASEAN and will be able to gather detailed information from hazard monitoring and disaster warning agencies in all ten ASEAN Member Countries in the events of natural disaster. Prior to and following its launching last year, the AHA Centre has already responded to natural disasters in ASEAN countries, for example, floods in Thailand, tropical storms in the Philippines and earthquakes in Indonesia. Finally, he called for the cooperation of AIPA members as partner of the government to encourage more of the government's support.

Discussion on National Initiatives and Possible Common Procedures of Management

17. The meeting discussed problems on natural disasters, particularly flooding, which occurred in AIPA Member Countries, namely, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam in recent years with the great loss of lives and economic disruption, during which the social mobilization and financial support were provided to the affected countries by their own governments, donor countries, NGOs and international organizations.
18. The meeting deliberated on the possibility of the creation of a standby disaster fund in ASEAN as proposed by the AIPA Secretary General for a prompt response to natural disasters. However, the meeting recognized that details regarding implementation need to be worked out.

19. The meeting agreed to request the AIPA Secretariat to undertake further studies on the details of the creation of the standby disaster fund and submit to the next AIPA Executive Committee Meeting and General Assembly in Indonesia in order to seek a consensus before consulting with the ASEAN leaders at the next ASEAN Summit.

THE SECOND SESSION

The Creation of an AIPA Core Group of Parliamentarians

20. The meeting deliberated and agreed that the separate creation of an AIPA Core Group of Parliamentarians as a stand-alone entity is not necessary so as not to create more administrative and financial constraints on members. However, the idea of an AIPA Core Group could be leveraged on AIPA Caucus framework.
21. The meeting agreed that the AIPA Caucus must strengthen the functions as stipulated in its Terms of Reference in monitoring the implementation of the resolutions as well as providing the platform for the interaction between AIPA and ASEAN.
22. The meeting agreed to form a task force comprising one representative from each country to discuss how to encourage AIPA countries to implement the resolutions that have been passed in previous AIPA General Assemblies for submission to the Chairperson for reporting at the next AIPA General Assembly.
23. The task force was duly formed and agreed to propose to the Chairperson that AIPA Caucus shall review and report the status of the AIPA resolutions implemented by the government of each country.
24. The Summary tables contain each country's recommendation on the Creation of an AIPA Core Group of Parliamentarians are attached as Annex H.

THE THIRD SESSION

25. The Third and closing session of the 4th AIPA Caucus was held on Wednesday, 2nd May 2012 at 09.00 a.m..

Date and Venue of the 5th AIPA Caucus

26. The meeting noted that Vietnam will chair the AIPA Caucus from April 2013 to May 2014 and will host the 5th AIPA Caucus meeting. The date and venue of the meeting will be announced by the AIPA Secretariat in due time.

Adoption of the Report of the 4th AIPA Caucus

27. During the session, Delegates considered and adopted the Report of the 4th AIPA Caucus. Upon the adoption of the Report, leaders of all AIPA Member Delegations signed the Report.

Closing Remarks

28. Hon. Mr. Abhisit Vejjajiva, Chairperson of the 4th AIPA Caucus, extended his gratitude to all delegates for their collaboration to share invaluable experiences and recommendations of the common concerns of the region. The Chairperson also highlighted that the outcome of the 4th AIPA Caucus will be translated into implementation. Finally, he extended his appreciation to the Secretary-General of AIPA and staff of the National Assembly of Thailand for their contributions to the meeting.

SITE VISIT TO THE NATIONAL DISASTER WARNING CENTER

29. Delegates made a visit to the National Disaster Warning Center on Wednesday, 2nd May 2012 at 01.00 p.m..