



STRENGTHENING ASEAN'S EXECUTIVE, JUDICIAL AND LEGISLATIVE NETWORKS

ASEAN-U.S. PROGRESS

Through the ASEAN-U.S. Partnership for Good Governance, Equitable and Sustainable Development and Security (PROGRESS), the U.S. Government supports ASEAN judicial cooperation, rule of law across the region, and the ASEAN Chairmanship.

The 10 member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) boast a combined population of over 625 million people and gross domestic product of \$2.4 trillion—making ASEAN the world's seventh largest economy. Deepening regional integration following the 2016 launch of the ASEAN Community presents new opportunities and challenges for the region. An area of mutual concern is judicial cooperation and the formalization of judicial mechanisms just now beginning to emerge.

The Council of ASEAN Chief Justices (CACJ) was recently formed following the 4th ASEAN Chief Justices Meeting (ACJM) meeting in Ho Chi Minh City in April of 2016. This new body will provide an opportunity for a regular exchange of views and best practices among the judiciaries and is now on the path toward ASEAN accreditation. Its success will be a critical step toward greater common understanding of the ever-growing body of ASEAN laws and agreements and their domestic application.

WHAT USAID IS DOING

ASEAN-U.S. PROGRESS supports ASEAN judicial cooperation by:

Supporting the establishment of a formal judicial cooperation framework

Building on the commitment of the ACJM as stated in the Boracay Accord of 2015, PROGRESS worked closely with the Chief Justice of the Philippines to convene the first ever meeting of the ACJM technical working groups in Tagaytay, Philippines, in early February 2016. The proceedings and contributions following the meeting sparked dialogue among senior judges about a path toward greater formalization under ASEAN and contributed to tangible progress on this front. At the 4th ACJM early the following April, the CACJ was established. PROGRESS is eager to continue to support the process of improved judicial cooperation by strengthening the nascent CACJ and supporting its working groups.

Supporting a Rules-Based ASEAN and Rule of Law

In late 2015, PROGRESS convened senior officials from all 10 ASEAN Member States in an effort to help ASEAN realize its stated aspiration to become a “rules-based” institution. Following the meeting, a concept to strengthen the ASEAN Secretariat’s capacity to report on the implementation of ASEAN legal instruments was put forth. In 2017, PROGRESS will work closely with ASEAN Secretariat’s Legal Service and Agreement Division to develop a practical system to report on the implementation of ASEAN agreements as well as provide support to draft overviews for select agreements.

Supporting the ASEAN Chair

In 2016, PROGRESS provided training to mid-level ministry officials from Lao PDR on priority issues relevant to the success of its Chairmanship and also translated and provided copies of the “ASEAN 2025 Vision: Forging Ahead Together” for distribution throughout the Lao PDR government. Finally, in 2017, as ASEAN celebrates its 50th anniversary, the U.S. Government will celebrate its 40th anniversary of partnership with ASEAN. PROGRESS hopes to support celebratory events as directed by the U.S. Mission to ASEAN.

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