

COVID-19 ECONOMIC RESPONSE

ASEAN PARLIAMENTARIANS' MANIFESTO

The COVID-19 pandemic and its subsequent economic recession revealed the failure and fragility of our current economic system that prioritized business interests over the well-being of people and the environment, deepened inequalities and failed to protect the most vulnerable.

It is therefore crucial that we use measures aimed at economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic to break away from the past and instead shift towards a just, sustainable and resilient economy that protects the human rights of all.

Shifting towards a greener economy that boosts decent employment, offers social protection to all, and sustainable food supplies, will not only help the region to more rapidly absorb the immediate impact of the recession, but also to avoid and be more resilient to future similar shocks and crises.

Parliamentarians can play a significant role in ensuring that measures aimed at economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic advance a just, sustainable and resilient economy that promotes, protects and respects the human rights of all.

We, parliamentarians from Southeast Asia, therefore commit to using our position to:

1. Advance an economy that keeps the increase in the world's temperatures to less than 1.5°C at the end of the century, where all, including future generations, are able to enjoy their human rights without harm from climate change, pollution, deforestation, waste and environmental degradation by:

1.1 Ensuring that measures adopted to tackle COVID-19 and the associated economic crisis do not weaken, but rather strengthen, existing environmental protection measures and their implementation;

1.2 Including in economic stimulus spending heightened direct support and financial incentives to renewable energy systems and zero-emissions infrastructures and technologies in accordance with the objectives of the Paris Agreement;

1.3 Conditioning economic relief to private sector entities, including their supply chains, to the immediate decrease of their levels of pollution, emissions, waste and other harmful environmental impacts in a manner compatible with the Paris Agreement and other international environmental and human rights standards; and

1.4 Enhancing Southeast Asian countries' Nationally Determined Contributions to the Paris Agreement to guarantee their compatibility with the Paris Agreement objectives.

2. Advancing an economy in which all are afforded adequate social protection and access to public essential services, including in times of crises by:

2.1. Ensuring that measures aimed at responding to and protecting persons from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic take into account the differentiated impact of the crises on those most marginalized and affected including, but not limited to, women, migrants, LGBTQIA persons,

differently-abled persons, asylum seekers and refugees, indigenous persons, peasants, ethnic and other minorities and those working in the informal economy;

2.2. Adapting, extending and scaling-up social protection schemes to those in the informal economy, refugees and migrant workers and others who may not be currently included; and

2.3. Ensuring affordable and continuous access for all to adequate public services in matters relating to health, education, transportation, water, housing and others, including during times of crisis and without discrimination

3. Advancing an economy with enhanced opportunities for decent, sustainable and safe employment for all, where workers, whether formal or informal, are adequately protected by:

3.1. Conditioning economic relief to the private sector on measures taken to ensure: Human rights due diligence in all operations, including across borders; The adequate implementation and protection of international workers rights, including decent working conditions and salaries, the right to a safe workplace, workers' freedom of assembly and association and the right to collective bargaining; Gender equality in recruitment and employment opportunities and non-discrimination in wages and access to promotion; and Workers' retention, access to training and enhanced employment opportunities.

3.2. Adopting measures that ensure that informal workers, migrants, women, LGBTQIA, differently-abled workers and other groups of workers are not made to suffer disproportionate impacts from the crisis by their employers or otherwise;

3.3. Prioritize measures that support and boost employment and income by: Investing in the creation of green and decent employment opportunities; and Targeting support measures to small and medium-sized enterprises in a manner consistent with a sustainable and just economy.

4. Advancing an economy that is able to guarantee affordable access to nutritious, sustainable and culturally appropriate food and other essential goods for all by:

4.1. Supporting measures towards increasing food self-sufficiency and localized ecologically sustainable production of food and other essential goods;

4.2. Adapting, extending and scaling-up quality food and other essential goods assistance programmes for all at reasonable prices; and

4.3. Ensuring that international and regional trade agreements do not threaten affordable access to healthy, affordable, sustainable and culturally appropriate food and other essential goods in times of crises.

5. Commit to ensuring that the above-mentioned objectives and measures are designed and implemented with the meaningful participation from all sectors of society;

6. Call on governments to consider funding these measures through the reallocation of funds from government agencies that do not have a direct role in containing the pandemic, such as security forces, to agencies that are, and through both voluntary contributions and taxation of the most wealthy corporations and individuals.

7. Invite all actors to join us in achieving these objectives.

Signatories

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- Mercy Barends, Member of the Parliament of Indonesia
- Francisca Castro, Member of the Parliament of the Philippines
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- Abidin Fikri, Member of the Parliament of Indonesia
- Abel da Silva, Member of the Parliament of Timor-Leste
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