Virtual Jakarta Forum on ASEAN-China Relations 2020

ASEAN-China Cooperation in Dealing with the COVID-19 Pandemic

Friday 29 May 2020

EVENT REPORT

www.fpcindonesia.org
Summary

Jakarta Forum series is designed to promote dynamic intellectual collaboration and comprehensive discussion between relevant stakeholders on the ASEAN - China relationship. This year discussion aims to explore the ways on how both ASEAN member countries and China can develop cooperation at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic and envision the relationship after this health crisis ends.

On Friday, 29 May 2020, Mission of the People’s Republic of China to ASEAN and the Mission of the Republic of the Philippines to ASEAN have successfully co-hosted the first Jakarta Forum on ASEAN-China Relations 2020 titled “ASEAN-China Cooperation in dealing with the COVID-19 Pandemic.” The forum was organized by Foreign Policy Community of Indonesia (FPCI) and attended by more than 1,000 viewers. There were fifteen (15) experts from ASEAN countries and China joining the forum as discussants.

The forum was started with opening remarks from H.E. Noel Eugene Eusebio Servigon in which he echoed the spirit of cooperation to combat COVID-19. He also emphasized that a full of ASEAN community approach is required to effectively address this pandemic. The forum was continued with three keynote speeches delivered by H.E. Kung Phoak, Deputy Secretary-General (DSG) of ASEAN for ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC), by H.E. Deng Xijun, Ambassador of China to ASEAN, and H.E. Jose Tavares, Director General of ASEAN Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia before the moderated discussion led by Prof. Dewi Fortuna Anwar began. The forum was closed with remarks from the founder of FPCI, Dr. Dino Patti Djalal.
Speakers

H.E. Kung Phoak is appointed as the Deputy Secretary-General (DSG) of ASEAN for ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) from 2018 to 2021. Before assuming this role, DSG Kung was the Undersecretary of State at the Office of the Council of Ministers of the Royal Government of Cambodia and was working on foreign policy in the Office of the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia. He is a Grand Cross of the Royal Order of Cambodia. H.E. Kung co-founded the Cambodian Institute for Strategic Studies, which started in 2014 as a network of Cambodian and foreign scholars called Cambodian Strategic Study Group aimed at providing pragmatic, non-partisan and evidence-based policy solutions. He had been a visiting Doctoral scholar at the University of Oxford in United Kingdom and Cornell University in United States of America.

H.E. Deng Xijun is the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People’s Republic of China to ASEAN. Prior to that, he was appointed as Special Envoy on the Afghanistan Affairs by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China from 2015-2020. In 2013-2015, Ambassador Deng served as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People’s Republic of China to Afghanistan. He was born in Wuxi, Jiangsu Province, China in June 1962.

H.E. Noel Eugene Eusebio M. Servigon is a career Foreign Service Officer of the Republic of the Philippines who is currently serving as Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Philippines to ASEAN. He joined the Department of Foreign Affairs in 1988. His diplomatic postings were in Vienna, Austria as Third/Second Secretary, Vice Consul/Consul and Alternate Representative to the International Atomic Energy Agency; in Ankara, Turkey, as First Secretary and Consul; in The Hague, Netherlands as First Secretary, Consul, and Deputy Permanent Representative to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons; in Abu Dhabi, UAE, as Minister and Consul General; in Manado, Indonesia, as Chief of Mission and Consul General; in Hong Kong as Chief of Mission and Consul General; and in Hanoi as the Philippine Ambassador to the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam.

Dr. Dino Patti Djalal is Founder of FPCI. He earned his Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from Carleton University (Ottawa, Canada); a Master Degree in Political Science from Simon Fraser University (Vancouver, Canada), and a PhD in International Relations from the London School of Economics and Political Science (London, UK). In 2004, when President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono began his term, he was appointed Special Staff of the President for International Affairs. From 2010 to 2013, Dino served as Indonesia's Ambassador to the United States. In June 2014, Dino was appointed Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, until October that year.
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Moderator

Prof. Dewi Fortuna Anwar is the Co-founder of FPCI and also known as Research Professor at the Research Center for Politics-Indonesian Institute of Sciences (P2P-LIPI). She was Distinguished Visiting Professor at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (2017-2018). She served as Deputy Secretary for Political Affairs (2010-2015) to Vice-President Boediono and Deputy for Government Policy Support (2015-2017) to Vice-President Jusuf Kalla. In 1998-1999, she became the Assistant Minister of State Secretariat for Foreign Affairs during the Habibie Presidency. She obtained her PhD from Monash University, Melbourne in 1990, while her M.A. and B.A. (Hons) were from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London in 1982 and 1981 respectively.

Discussants

Tan Sri Dr. Jemilah Mahmood
Special Advisor to the PM of Malaysia on Public Health & Former USG at IFRC in Geneva

Dr. N. Paranietharan
WHO Representative to Indonesia

Hadi Kuntjara, Ph.D
Executive Director of The Habibie Center

Dr. Shofwan Al-Banna
FPCI's China Policy Group (CPG)

Dr. Dinna Prapto Raharja
FPCI's China Policy Group (CPG)

Lydia Ruddy
Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA)

Dato Abdul Majit Ahmad Khan
Adjunct Professor, Institute of China Studies, University of Malaya, Malaysia

Dr. Jayant Menon
Visiting Senior Fellow, ISEAS, Singapore

Dr. Vannarith Chheang
President of the Asian Vision Institute (AVI), Chairman of the Advisory Council of the National Assembly of Cambodia

Dr. Henry Chan
Visiting Senior Research Fellow Cambodia Institute for Cooperation & Peace

Irene Chan
Associate Research Fellow, Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) NTU, Singapore

Dr. ZHANG Jie
Research Fellow, Head of Security and Foreign Affairs Department, National Institute of International Strategy, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS)

Ms. YANG Yue
Associate Professor and Deputy Director, Institute of Asian Studies, China Foreign Affairs University (CFAU)

Dr. TANG Qifang
Associate Research Fellow, Department for International and Strategic Studies, China Institute of International Studies (CIIS)

Dr. Dafri Agussalam
Director of ASEAN Study Center, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta

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Agenda

**Time**

09:10-09:15  Opening Remarks by H.E. Noel Eugene Eusebio Servigon, Permanent Representative of the Philippines to ASEAN

09:15-09:30  Keynote Speech by H.E. Kung Phoak, Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community

09:30-09:45  Keynote Speech by H.E. Deng Xijun, Ambassador of China to ASEAN

09:45-09:55  Keynote Speech by H.E. Jose Tavares, Director General of ASEAN Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia

09:55-11:30  Moderated Discussion led by Prof. Dewi Fortuna Anwar, Co-founder of FPCI and Research Professor at Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI)

11:30-11:50  Closing Remarks by Dr. Dino Patti Djalal, Founder of FPCI
Key Messages

H.E. Noel Eugene Eusebio Servigon

“As we all can attest, the coronavirus pandemic has forced us to quickly innovate and interact in new ways, but while our medium is different today the principles that guide ASEAN-China dialogue relations remain the same; solidarity, friendship, and cooperation especially during difficult times. No other topic is more relevant today than how we can bond together to emerge victorious over a microscopic threat that has posed enormous consequences for our region and for the world.”

H.E. Kung Phoak

“ASEAN response to the pandemic can only be more effective if done in partnership with relevant sectors within ASEAN and with the development and dialogue partner that is China. With regard to the ASEAN-China cooperation with the further commitment announced by Premier Li Keqiang to support ASEAN initiative on regional response fund and other health-related engagement on COVID-19.”

H.E. Deng Xijun

"I'm convinced that with the strong leadership of Chinese and ASEAN leaders, with the solidarity and cooperation among countries in our region, we will prevail over the virus as early as possible. As State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi put in at his press conference a few days ago, rainbow will appear after a storm. China will continue to view ASEAN as a high priority in its neighborhood diplomacy and support ASEAN centrality in East Asia cooperation. China is ready to move our relations forward in the spirit of mutual trust, mutual accommodation, mutual benefit and mutual assistance."
H.E. Jose Tavares

“The ASEAN and China have a strong cooperation, strong engagement to jointly address the COVID-19 pandemic. ASEAN member states are collaborating, assisting one another in the provision of essential medical supplies and equipment. We have committed to ease the regulations for those essential supplies and we should gradually continue the flows of those essential goods.”

Dr. Dino Patti Djalal

“The COVID-19 crisis is something that can and should make us closer as it affects not just ASEAN but the whole world and this crisis will prove to make ASEAN and China closer in terms of their cooperation and what is important that ASEAN China cooperation should needs to be ‘science-based’, ‘need-based’ and ‘resource-based’.”

Tan Sri Dr. Jemilah Mahmood
Special Advisor to the PM of Malaysia on Public Health & Former USG at IFRC in Geneva

“China has done some quiet work in vaccine research and has moved to stage 2 in some of the vaccine trials. How does ASEAN as a bloc form a much stronger negotiating power bloc in terms of access to vaccines because we all know when the vaccine is available, there will be competition on who gets the vaccine? It is extremely important that everyone has access to vaccines and I think ASEAN as a bloc can actually do that to really weigh in, on access to vaccines.”

Dr. N. Paranietharan
Country Representative of WHO Indonesia

“Rather than competing who found the vaccine first, it will be about how we can make more of it quickly to be able to share it with everybody. It is an important initiative for everybody to work together, ASEAN and ASEAN+3 to work together to support so that we can reduce that tension that has created unhealthy conflicts among countries.”
Dr. Dinna Prapto Raharja
FPCI’s China Policy Group (CPG)

“A lot of the manufacturing capacity in the world is now based in China or at least the assembling activity is in China. A lot of other countries especially in ASEAN rely on the service sector which is badly affected by the pandemic. We have not found the ‘new normal’ for this tourism, trade, people to people meeting. How do we ensure that manufacturing opportunities are also shared among these middle-income countries? ASEAN is among the best community purchasing power in the world; therefore, we may not be qualified in the long run for global help in terms of economic help, but we do have the capacity to manufacture products.”

Dato Abdul Majit Ahmad Khan
Adjunct Professor, Institute of China Studies, University of Malaya, Malaysia

“The ASEAN-China cooperation has very good mechanisms in place but I think what we need is to make them more effective and more result-oriented. For example, in my opinion, the ASEAN-China cooperation fund is quite under-utilized, it needs to be picked up and the difficulties are on the ASEAN side as there are difficulties to reach consensus on projects proposed.”

Ms. YANG Yue
Associate Professor and Deputy Director, Institute of Asian Studies, China Foreign Affairs University (CFAU)

“We need to see this year as an opportunity, ASEAN-China digital economy cooperation to further strengthen our strategic integration on this and jointly promote the construction of Digital Silk Road. I think that will help us to mitigate negative economic impact especially when vaccines are currently not available so to prepare for the worst scenario. Furthermore, we need to work together on building digital infrastructure so as to bridge the digital divide in each respective country.”
Lydia Ruddy  
Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA)

“We also need to maintain ASEAN centrality and neutrality, stable and transparent relationship between China and ASEAN, not only by providing solid bases for working together but also serve to increase trust between China and the middle power countries of the region including Australia and New Zealand. This relationship could boost stronger bonds for the benefit of all countries.”

Dr. Jayant Menon  
Visiting Senior Fellow, ISEAS, Singapore

“What we need to understand is the three different levels of important response, the main response might be national and multi-lateral response. I would like to call for a revival of the ASEAN+3 as this group was born out of a crisis and it is designed to face a crisis and particularly well suited in this environment, it can help to coordinate the fiscal stimulus program in order to face long term challenges such as the economic fallout.”

Dr. Henry Chan  
Visiting Senior Research Fellow Cambodia Institute for Cooperation & Peace

“China and other Asian countries should accelerate the flow of goods and we also need to re-evaluate our best practices.”

Dr. Vannarith Chheang  
President of the Asian Vision Institute (AVI), Chairman of the Advisory Council of the National Assembly of Cambodia

“We have many statements to express our solidarity but if we look at the activity and action in the ground, it is more on the national level. When we mention solidarity, it means the action being done together. Regarding regional cooperation, I support the ASEAN+3 as it is the most effective way in responding to the crisis. ASEAN+3 has also great potential to work closely together to mobilize resources in order to mitigate the crisis.”
Dr. ZHANG Jie  
Research and Head of Security and the Foreign Affairs Department, National Institute of International Strategy, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS)  
“My question is, how could ASEAN expand cooperation to other areas and other countries? Besides the ASEAN+3, who is the next priority partner, could it be Australia, New Zealand or South Asian countries?”

Irene Chan  
Associate Research Fellow, Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) NTU, Singapore  
“As mentioned earlier, China is still protecting its territory and sovereignty throughout the times. In the meantime, how can each and every one of us imagine the new normal as it will affect a country’s territory and sovereignty, and what does the new normal mean? Or were there new normal for regional security, strategic compilation of power dynamics as well as influence?”

Dr. Dafri Agussalim  
Director of ASEAN Study Center, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta  
“From my point of view, it seems that ASEAN as a regional organization is still struggling to face the COVID-19 issue. But the COVID-19 global pandemic is also a good reason for ASEAN to review its performance and learn to carry our better practices for regional cooperation. ASEAN member states have to understand the meaning of solidarity through better actions to deal with this kind of pandemic situation and also in the future.”

Dr. Shofwan Al-Banna  
FPCI’s China Policy Group (CPG)  
“As the global pandemic creates challenges to the legitimacy for many governments in ASEAN member states, how are we going to mitigate this situation and how national governments maintain their legitimacy without sacrificing fragile trust in the region?”
Selected Media Coverage

Metro TV - Metro Xinwen
ASEAN-Tiongkok Diskusi Virtual soal Penanganan & Pengendalian Covid-19


Rakyat Merdeka Online
Nilai Perdagangan China-ASEAN Lebih Tinggi Daripada Dengan Uni Eropa

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Antara News
Di tengah krisis wabah, ASEAN jadi mitra dagang terbesar China


Jaringan Pemberitaan Nusantara Negeriku
Proyek Garapan Tiongkok di ASEAN Tak Terhambat Pandemi, Perdagangan Juga Meningkat

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Lensa Purbalingga
Kerjasama ASEAN-China, Dino Patti Djalal: Pertumbuhan Ekonomi Kuarter Kedua di Indonesia Rendah


Xinhuan Net
China-ASEAN trade ties remain resilient despite COVID-19 pandemic: ambassador

JAKARTA, May 29 (Xinhua) -- The trade relationship between China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries remains resilient despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Chinese Ambassador to ASEAN Deng Ai Jun said here Friday.

Citing data from China's General Administration of Customs, the diplomat said that there is a 6.1-percent growth of China-ASEAN trade in goods in the first quarter of 2020 with a value exceeding 140 billion U.S. dollars.

ASEAN became China's largest trading partner for the first time, surpassing both the European Union and the United States.
