

## **ASEAN Council of Teachers (ACT)**

### **Background of ASEAN Council of Teachers**

Since ASEAN was founded as an organization of the five south East Asia countries, leaders of teachers' association in ASEAN countries thought over a possibility of having a form of organization with a view enabled them to foster concepts and aims of ASEAN, especially on the field of education and culture. It aims at further promoting closer relationship between teachers in ASEAN Countries.

- a. On the initiative of World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession(WCOTP), a seminar participated by the representatives of teachers' association of ASEAN member countries was held in Kuala Lumpur, 6 – 10 December 1976. The theme for the seminar was “ The Role of Teacher Organizations in Five ASEAN Countries in promoting the Philosophy and Concept as well as the aims and Objective of ASEAN”

The topics discussed in the seminar were as follows:

1. The philosophy and Concept of ASEAN
  2. ASEAN Today – an assessment
  3. ASEAN and the ESCAP Region
  4. ASEAN and Global Community With Special Emphasis on the United Nation
  5. The Role of Teachers' Organizations in Promoting the Philosophy and Concept of ASEAN
- b. In WCOTP ASEAN Regional Conference held in Baguio City, the Philippines on 5 May 1977, a meeting was held with the representative of teachers' associations from Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore and the Philippines. A discussion of the possibility of founding one forum of teachers' associations of ASEAN was set up.

In the essence of the discussion, all participants came to an agreement to found association and decided to have a further discussion in a meeting to be held in Jakarta while the members were attending WCOTP XXII Assembly of Delegates.

- c. On 31 July 1978 the chairman of the delegates of teachers' association on ASEAN member countries, attending the 1978 WCOTP World Assembly of Delegates, held a special and separate meeting in Jakarta. The thirteen teachers' associations of ASEAN countries had found a common need for having one real and formal teachers' association of ASEAN countries.

The meeting decided that the association was aimed at realizing and fostering the philosophy, the concept and aims of ASEAN. It also decided that the next meeting was to be held in Singapore in November 1978. The programmes were to decide the name of the association, to discuss the structure of the organization, the aims and the executive committee, and to work out activities of the associations, and so forth.

- d. Further to the meeting held in Jakarta, as ASEAN teachers' association meeting was held in Singapore on 23 November 1978. The principal decisions are as follows:

- 1) Name of the teachers' association of the five ASEAN countries is ASEAN Council of Teachers(ACT)
- 2) ACT should be a flexible and loose federation of teachers' organizations in the ASEAN countries.
- 3) The aims of ACT are set as
  - a) to cooperate with the members in realizing the philosophy and aims of ASEAN as well as the spirit and culture of the nations in this region:
  - b) to foster and cooperate with ASEAN countries in the common projects and programmes sharing mutual interests in the fields of teaching, education, science and culture:
  - c) to foster the development of educational activities directed towards the achievement of aims and aspiration of ASEAN
- 4) The ACT Secretariat shall be administered by turns by each of the five ASEAN countries. The teachers' associations of each country shall be responsible to serve for one year.
- 5) At a beginning stage, in the organizational development, ACT shall conduct activities such as goodwill tours, sports, conventions, meeting seminars and cultural festivals

- 6) The activities mentioned above are not only to be participated by the leaders of each organization but all teachers in ASEAN countries as well.
  - 7) The teachers associations participating in the activities mentioned in point(5) shall bear the participants' expense.
  - 8) A local association of teachers shall be responsible for raising fund to finance the associations and may contact foundations, local as well as international agency, provided it has binding agreements.
  - 9) ACT meeting are held whenever needed. They can be held on the occasion where activities organized by international institutions are attended by teachers' association of ASEAN.
  - 10) Singapore Teachers' Union was designed as chairman and responsible for the office of act secretariat for the 1978/1979 term of office.
  - 11) The principal ACT activity in this term was to hold the first Convention in Bangkok for the four days in 1979. KHURUSAPHA, the Teachers Council of Thailand was the host and organizing committee.
- e. In the World congress of International Federation of Free Teacher Unions(IFTTU) held in Manila, 15 – 22 December 1978, the delegates of teachers associations of the five ASEAN countries had an opportunity to hold a meeting on 20 December 1978. This ASEAN delegates meeting discussed again the decisions made in Singapore on 23 December 1978 and further programmes of ACT.

The participants emphasized the necessity of publishing aims and activities held by ACT. The first effort made was that the Convention was held for four days in Bangkok

- f. Negara Brunei Darussalam become the sixth member in December 1985. Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia became the seventh, eighth and ninth members respectively in 1999.

Since the first Convention of 1979, the key word representing ACT's concern are Solidarity, Awareness, Development, Cooperation, Change, and Value Education, as can be seen in the themes chosen through the years.