



Delegation for relations with the countries of Southeast Asia and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

**Statement for the 43rd AIPA General Assembly by
Daniel CASPARY, Chair of the Delegation for relations
with ASEAN, on behalf of the European Parliament**

Excellences,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear friends,

It is a great honour and a privilege to address, on behalf of the European Parliament, the 43rd General Assembly of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly. Allow me to extend the best wishes of the President of the European Parliament, who asked me to represent Parliament on in her place.

For the European Parliament this is a very special week. Tomorrow, in the plenary session in Strasbourg, my colleagues will celebrate the 70th anniversary of our assembly. It was, seven decades ago that the foundations were laid of what became the European Parliament.

Our assembly is a trans-national, multi-lingual institution expressing democratically and directly the will of almost 450 million citizens. The Parliament strives to promote in the relations with the wider world peace, security, sustainable development, the protection of human rights, as well as the strict observance of international law.

We share part of this DNA with you, our friends and partners from ASEAN. Both our organisations are ambitious projects of peace and prosperity.

The principles and values our organisations are founded upon are being increasingly challenged nowadays.

The Russian Federation's illegal, unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against and invasion of Ukraine are not only an attack against a sovereign country, but an attack against the international order. The UN Charter states that countries "shall refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state".

The Russian Federation is bluntly disregarding the norms of our international system and wishes to replace the rule of law by the rule of force. Their actions have consequences for all of us, such as by Russia weaponising global food and energy security.

We must not allow it. The European Parliament has condemned in the strongest possible terms the aggression. We demand Russia to immediately terminate all military activities in Ukraine and unconditionally withdraw all military and paramilitary forces and military equipment from the entire internationally recognised territory the country, and fully respect Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence within its internationally recognised borders.

In October, 143 countries voiced their support for the territorial integrity of Ukraine and condemned the so-called referendums organised by Russia in the attempt to illegally annex four Ukrainian regions. The world clearly sees who is the unilateral aggressor and stands in the defence of the Charter of the United Nations.

ASEAN has a firm partner in the European Union in preserving the peace and the prosperity of the Indo-Pacific region, knowing that special focus rests on Taiwan and the South China Sea. We are ready to work by your side to maintain a free and open Indo-Pacific, in full compliance with international law, in particular the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

The European Parliament is equally ready to continue to support all efforts for the return to democracy in Myanmar. We are shocked by the heinous atrocities, mass killings and widespread human rights violations against the population of Myanmar committed by the military junta since the February 2021 coup d'état.

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Dear friends,

This year, we celebrate 45 years since the establishment of the relations between the EU and ASEAN. Over these years, and especially since the establishment of our strategic partnership in 2020, our relations have deepened, enriched and grew stronger. This is therefore an important milestone, that will be marked by the first EU - ASEAN Summit at the level of the Heads of states and governments of Member States.

In a challenging global economic and security context, the high-level summit that will take place in Brussels, send a strong message about the importance of our strategic partnership.

As we will further discuss tomorrow in the 2nd EP-AIPA Dialogue, the potential for greater engagement between the EU and ASEAN is enormous.

The EU is ASEAN's second largest trading partner and ASEAN is the EU's third largest trading partner. The EU concluded Free Trade Agreements with Singapore and Vietnam. , Our long term goal, once the conditions are met, is to establish a region-to-region free trade with ASEAN, based on shared values and principles.

Stronger relations between us, parliamentarians, only complement and reinforce the EU-ASEAN strategic partnership. The European Parliament is committed to ambitiously further develop the EP-AIPA Dialogue, through annual exchanges alternating between Europe and ASEAN.

I would like to conclude by thanking you all for the warm welcome and, in particular, Cambodia for the hospitality. I wish you fruitful parliamentary consultations!