



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Australia-ASEAN Youth Summits: Students Unveil Youth Declaration at Parliament House**

**Canberra - August 19, 2024** – The 2024 Australia-ASEAN Youth Summit took place at Parliament House in Canberra on Monday.

Facilitated by Asia Education Foundation (AEF), the event brought together over 120 high school students from across Australia and nine countries in Southeast Asia. Participation was hybrid, with 24 students attending in person and 100 joining virtually, highlighting the AEF's commitment to connecting young leaders across the region.

The Summit followed two virtual sessions held on June 18 and July 25 during which students engaged in in-depth discussions about regional cooperation between Australia and Southeast Asia. Students then collaborated to create a Youth Declaration with recommendations on six Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including quality education, gender equity and climate action.

In the Declaration, students called on leaders to urgently address issues of education inequality, gender discrimination, renewable energy transition, social and economic inequalities, sustainable urban development, and climate change mitigation. Their declaration reflects the passion and urgency of youth voices calling for bold, transformative action.

At the Canberra Summit, students presented their Youth Declaration to Australian Government Ministers, Members of Parliament and representatives from Southeast Asian nations. They enjoyed addresses from The Hon Tim Watts MP, Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs and The Hon Dr Anne Aly MP, Minister for Youth. Students were also able to meet distinguished guests, including The Hon Jason Clare MP, Minister for Education and Senator the Hon Penny Wong, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The Australia-ASEAN Youth Summits are funded by the ASEAN-Australia Centre (formerly Australia-ASEAN Council) at the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and implemented by Asia Education Foundation, part of Asialink at the University of Melbourne.

## **Quotes**

### **Senator the Hon Penny Wong, Minister for Foreign Affairs:**

“Young people can help strengthen ties between Australia and Southeast Asia.”

“It was wonderful to meet future leaders from across the region at the Australian-ASEAN Youth Summit today.

“Sharing perspectives and building understanding will shape our region for the better.”

### **The Hon Tim Watts MP, Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs:**

"Connections between Australia and our Southeast Asian neighbours – and in particular, between our young people – are so important, helping form the foundations for our countries to deal with the challenges of today and of the future."

### **The Hon. Dr Anne Aly MP, Minister for Youth:**

“The Australian-ASEAN Youth Summit is an opportunity for young people to simulate diplomatic conversations and learn about international relations.

“It was wonderful to meet such engaged young people who are contributing positively as global citizens.

“I can't wait to see the change young people at the Summit make in the region.”

### **Ambassador Ma. Hellen B. De La Vega, Ambassador of The Philippines to Australia:**

“The Youth Summit showcased the incredible potential of our youth to lead and drive meaningful change. Their Youth Declaration reflects a strong commitment to addressing global challenges and fostering closer ties between Australia and ASEAN.”

### **Fiona Hoggart, Head of the ASEAN-Australia Centre:**

“The Youth Declaration presented by the students underscores the importance of youth voices in regional dialogue. It is inspiring to see such enthusiasm and thoughtfulness from the next generation of leaders.”

### **Dr Sarah Richardson, Executive Director of the Asia Education Foundation:**

“The Youth Summits have been a remarkable platform for young leaders to express their views on sustainable development. AEF is passionate about providing all students with opportunities to learn about each other's countries and to engage with their peers across our region. The Youth Declaration is a testament to current students' commitment to regional cooperation and a sustainable future.”

**ENDS.**

## Speakers, Guests & Participants

Throughout the day, participants heard from and engaged with guest speakers, who shared their insights about the importance of youth involvement in international affairs and Australia's engagement with the region, including:

- **Jakahn Von Senden**, Office for First Nations International Engagement, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade – Acknowledgement of Country & Virtual Cohort Speaker
- **The Hon Tim Watts MP**, Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs – Keynote Speaker
- **The Hon Dr Anne Aly MP**, Minister for Youth – Youth Declaration Speaker
- **Fiona Hoggart**, Head of the ASEAN-Australia Centre, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade – Closing Remarks

Special guests, including ministers, ambassadors, and dignitaries, engaged in informal networking with participants and addressed the virtual cohort. Notable guests included:

- **The Hon Jason Clare MP**, Minister for Education
- **Senator the Hon Penny Wong**, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Leader of the Government in the Senate
- **Ms Dai Le MP**, Member for Fowler (NSW)
- **Her Excellency Mrs Ma. Hellen BARBER DE LA VEGA**, Philippine Ambassador to Australia
- **Her Excellency Ms Arjaree SRIRATANABAN**, Thai Ambassador to Australia
- **His Excellency Mr Chanborey CHEUNBORAN**, Cambodian Ambassador to Australia
- **Mr. Abu Hirzan Mustapa**, Deputy Head of Mission and Counsellor, High Commission of Malaysia
- **Ms Vilaylack Souvannaeth**, Second Secretary, Embassy of the Lao PDR

The summit also featured a panel discussion on study and career journeys in the region with distinguished panellists:

- **Jules Caburian**, Co-founder of the 23 Sampaguita Artist Collective
- **Soklin Chhorn**, Australia Awards Cambodia Scholar
- **Brandon Choong**, First Secretary, Singapore High Commission in Canberra
- **Grace Corcoran**, Diplomacy Program Lead, Asialink (Online)
- **Adelaide Pope**, Chief Operations Officer, ASEAN-Australia Youth Strategic Partnerships
- **Alouny Senduangdeth**, Director of Impact, ASEAN Youth Organization (Laos) (Online)

Schools that participated in the Australia-ASEAN Youth Summit in Canberra:

- Bairnsdale Secondary College - VIC
- Burnside State High School - QLD
- Canberra Girls Grammar School - ACT
- Hurlstone Agricultural High School – NSW
- Kelmscott Senior High School – WA
- The Essington School - NT

- Vincentia High School – NSW
- Werribee Secondary College - VIC
- Woodville High School – SA
- Australian International School – Singapore

Schools that participated in the Australia-ASEAN Youth Summit online:

- Kirwan State High School – QLD
- St Patrick's College, Launceston - TAS
- Cambodia Rural Students Trust - Cambodia
- Chommany Secondary School - Laos
- Milaor National High School - Philippines
- Sekolah Menengah Sains Tuanku Aishah Rohani - Malaysia
- Sekolah Tinggi Perempuan Raja Isteri - Brunei
- Suankularb Wittayalai Rangsit School (SKR) - Thailand
- SMA Negeri 2 Sekayu - Indonesia
- SMA Pradita Dirgantara – Indonesia
- Vinschool Times City School – Vietnam

### **About Asia Education Foundation**

Asia Education Foundation (AEF) - the education experts from Asialink at the University of Melbourne - has been successfully advancing Asia literacy, intercultural understanding, and global citizenship for more than 30 years, and across 23 nations in Asia and the Pacific. Through impactful programs we have enabled thousands of students, teachers, school leaders and young professionals to build the global perspectives, cultural understanding, partnerships and networks they need to effectively navigate a shared future in our region.

For more information about AEF, please visit: <https://www.asiaeducation.edu.au/>

You can also contact the Asia Education Foundation via phone (+61 3 8344 4800) or email ([aef-support@asialink.unimelb.edu.au](mailto:aef-support@asialink.unimelb.edu.au)).

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