Ministry of Foreign Affairs
and International Cooperation

2ND ASEAN - ITALY YOUTH CONFERENCE (AIYC)

EPICENTRUM OF YOUTH

FINAL COMMUNIQUÉ 2023

29-30-31 MAY, 2023

ASEAN SECRETARIAT

JAKARTA, INDONESIA

GLOBAL ACTION

May 31th, 2023

Dear Excellencies,
Dear Country Representatives,
Dear School Principals and Professors,
Dear Colleagues,
Dear Students,

In September 2020, Italy obtained the prestigious role of ASEAN Development Partner. Taking the opportunity of such recognition and turning the new normal dictated by the Covid-19 pandemic into an advantage to expand our mandate, Global Action decided to celebrate this new level of cooperation by designing a **new international free program entirely dedicated to ASEAN and Italian high schoolers.** Between March and April 2021, the *1st ASEAN-Italy Youth Conference* took place online, involving more than 100 students from Italy and all ASEAN Countries discussing *Covid-19 Response, Education and Innovation* and *Sustainability*.

After two years, Global Action joined forces again with the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the ASEAN Secretariat to organize an in-person event. The 2nd ASEAN-Italy Youth Conference took place at the **ASEAN Secretariat, in Jakarta, Indonesia, from the 29th to the 31st of May 2023.** Thanks to the contribution of the Italian MFA and the support of the ASEAN Secretariat, Global Action was able to provide all the participants the possibility to freely join the Conference in Jakarta.

After the training phase, which involved representatives of the Italian MFA, the ASEAN Secretariat, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the ASEAN Youth Organization (AYO), the participants met in Jakarta to discuss and find possible global common solutions to two main challenges: *Climate Change and Food Security and Youth Empowerment and Digitalization*. They were given the task of preparing recommendations with the aim of strengthening the cooperation between Italy and ASEAN from a youth perspective. The Conference was opened by the institutional Opening Ceremony with keynote speeches by H.E. Ekkaphab Phanthavong, Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community; Mr. Ruben Caruccio, First Secretary of the Embassy of Italy to Indonesia and ASEAN; Mr. Senjaya Mulia, Founder of ASEAN Youth Organization; and Ms. Carlotta Venza, President of Global Action.

The final communiqué and proposals drafted by the two Commissions were presented during the Closing Ceremony of the Conference in front of representatives of the ASEAN Secretariat, the Italian MFA, the Italian Ministry of Sport and Youth, the Delegation of the European Union to ASEAN, Permanent Representations to ASEAN and ASEAN Embassies to Italy.

The *2nd ASEAN-Italy Youth Conference* has been a clear demonstration of Global Action's mission, aimed at enhancing multiculturality, curiosity, and proactivity among students who are geographically distant and strengthening their inclination to intercultural dialogue. During the Conference, Global Action was able to erase such distance by uniting 33 students from 11 countries and letting them share the same common purpose: to show their willingness to concretely take action in the fields of Climate Change and Food Security, and Youth Empowerment and Digitalization.

I would like to personally thank everyone who took part in this journey for their hard work, commitment, and passion: without your support, all of this would not have been possible.

Carlotta Venza
President of Global Action

May 31th, 2023

2ND ASEAN-ITALY YOUTH CONFERENCE (AIYC)

CLIMATE CHANGE AND FOOD SECURITY YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND DIGITALIZATION

FINAL COMMUNIQUÉ 2023

We, the Delegates of the *2nd ASEAN-Italy Youth Conference*, met to discuss and share our own local experiences at the ASEAN Secretariat, in Jakarta, Indonesia, from the 29th to the 31st of May 2023.

In light of the success of the *1st ASEAN-Italy Youth Conference,* We committed to further strengthen the already established cooperation among our countries by sharing our experiences and finding global solutions to issues related to *Climate Change and Food Security, and Youth Empowerment and Digitalization*.

In a time where We need to continuously adapt to the new normal and match it with new global challenges:

We *stand up* for the right of the youth of ASEAN and Italy to live in a fairer and more equitable world;

We *accept* the challenge to have a positive impact for our and future generations by delivering specific and concrete proposals;

We *hope* for the Leaders of ASEAN and Italy to evaluate our recommendations and *give* feedback and impressions;

We *ask* ASEAN and Italy to consider and answer our call to action.

The Delegates of the 2nd ASEAN-Italy Youth Conference

CLIMATE CHANGE AND FOOD SECURITY

We, the Delegates of the Climate Change and Food Security Commission:

Request **ASEAN and Italy to discourage farmers from using chemical substances that can harm the environment and, more specifically, soil and plants, and to promote the use of organic products for agriculture.**

Governments should discourage the use of chemical substances such as, but not limited to, synthetic pesticides and fertilizers, as they can cause distress to the environment by contaminating water sources, harming beneficial organisms like pollinators and natural predators, and contributing to soil degradation. Farmers that use them regularly should slowly substitute such substances with others, including organic, animal and/or vegetal manures. Governments should also boost crop rotation – the practice of growing a series of different types of crops in the same area across a sequence of growing seasons – to maintain soil structure and prevent soil-borne pests.

Call upon **ASEAN and Italy to promote civic engagement and participation in decision-making processes fostering urban development and sustainability within local communities.**

Governments should empower the civil sector in the conceptualization of urban development plans in line with the most recent principles of sustainability and with the involvement of relevant stakeholders such as, but not limited to, public entities, citizens, and enterprises. In creating urban development plans, all relevant parties should collaborate to establish a set of shared standards and goals to create a functional and environmentally sustainable community that benefits all. Governments should also engage with the local communities through dialogues and discussions, in order to periodically assess the efficacy of the aforementioned urban development plans and allow local communities to reflect and improve in the pursuit of a long-term environmental sustainability vision.

Suggest **ASEAN and Italy implement agroforestry policies, connect the local farmers with the ecotourism industry and sponsor the communities for adopting natural development plans.**

Governments should encourage the establishment of local councils composed of farmers, ecotourism industry representatives, experts, and agents from the Ministries of Agriculture. Their main objectives would be to provide benefits for the farmers and promote reforestation through programs focusing on raising awareness, helping the farmers during the agroforestry transition, and achieving a comprehensive balance among the needs of the tourism industry, the agricultural sector, and forestry. Such councils should promote long-term plans and activities such as hosting meetings between farmers in different regions to exchange experiences and creating educational programs for residents and tourists about sustainable living within agroforestry realities.

Call on **ASEAN and Italy to enforce and boost mobility within each country, supporting programs that incentivize youth and create accessible, inclusive, and efficient public mobility frameworks capable to reduce carbon emissions.**

Governments should partner with the private sector to implement infrastructure plans that would be able to link in an efficient way even the most rural parts of a country, such that essential facilities are conveniently accessible to all demographics. These would include extensive pedestrian crossings, pavements, bus routes, as well as subway or railway systems that align with a walk-ride- cycle framework. Governments should promote youth-targeted programs such as, but not limited to, a carbon credit point system that would keep track of the usage of public transportation to promote it as a way of life. Overall, such initiatives would represent a concerted effort towards persuading people to adopt sustainable lifestyles and effectively reducing traffic congestion and carbon emissions by making public mobility the norm.

Invite ASEAN and Italy to take preventive measures against natural disasters by promoting the construction of earthquake-proof buildings, establishing preventive mechanisms to handle floods, and investigating new methods to tackle all other forms of natural disasters.

While natural disasters are beyond the control of human beings, governments should nonetheless consider concrete ways to face them to preserve people's lives and build safe places in circumstances of emergency. In this regard, governments should set up notification systems to warn their citizens about upcoming natural disasters and make them able to prepare and cope with them. Governments should also raise awareness on the impact of their actions on contributing to natural disasters by creating, for example, volunteering programs to give the youth knowledge about the importance of natural resources and how to help the environment.

Call upon ASEAN and Italy to implement the waste segregation system and concretely support parties involved in the recycling procedures.

Governments, together with local authorities, should promote legal frameworks related to the separation of food waste from plastic waste. They should conduct partnerships with private biomass energy companies to handle food waste management and turn it into energy supply facilities for the country. Governments should encourage plastic brand companies to create reverse plastic vending machines in exchange for cash and make them easily accessible to the public by placing them in areas such as schools, parks, and workspaces, giving everyone the opportunity to play a part in such an initiative. As for non-biodegradable plastics, national governments should collaborate with the parties involved in their production and distribution to handle their disposal.

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND DIGITALIZATION

We, the Delegates of the Youth Empowerment and Digitalization Commission:

Suggest **ASEAN and Italy create a digital platform entitled "Whole World, One Community", where all members of the youth may access worldwide educational opportunities through only one application.**

All students, regardless of their economic standing, should have the ability to choose their future. Digitalization can serve as a tool to achieve this. Modeled on the existing online platforms, the "*Whole World, One Community*" digital platform would enable students to access opportunities through one profile. They would be able to apply to state universities around the world and be guided in case of additional requirements and/or tests. Furthermore, the digital platform would be carefully designed to be inclusive of the different educational systems, therefore better supporting marginalized youth, including displaced people and immigrants, in their endeavors. Such a digital platform would also prevent the brain drain phenomenon by giving awareness to region-based scholarships and education loans.

Request **ASEAN and Italy to encourage investments in Internet infrastructure and help subsidize Internet service fees.**

The program "*ASEAN 2F Digital Society*" would encourage investment and tech transfer from ASEAN Member States, Italy, the OECD, as well as all relevant private sector organizations, and serve the purpose of improved broadband infrastructure and subsidization of Internet fees. Creating consistent rural connectivity would enable the gradual employment of rural workers, as well as the accumulation of ICT skills, thereby partaking in the digital economy. Likewise, various underserved urban areas of marginalized people would benefit from the subsidization of Internet fees, which would reduce the digital divide. This program would tackle the quality and affordability of digitalization for underprivileged recipients.

Request **ASEAN and Italy to increase collaboration between schools and employers regarding digital skills and ensure that the quality of teaching and the curricula meet global standards by promoting teaching courses and collaborating with other countries.**

Governments should cooperate with employers to understand what digital skills are essential and need to be included in the educational systems of the countries. Educational curricula should also be regularly updated to ensure the relevance of their content. Teachers should be well-trained to be able to use their skills to nurture students. They should also have regular training programs to ensure that they develop and update their skills over time. Those programs should be verified by an internationally accredited third party for quality assurance. To help developing countries, ASEAN and Italy should collaborate to share best practices for educating teachers and forming a good curriculum. In addition to this, ASEAN, Italy, and the private sector should increase cooperation to locate funds.

Encourage **ASEAN and Italy to establish a "Youth Union" and urge the private sector to fund educational programs for it and create a youth online platform in line with the SDGs of the UN 2030 Agenda.**

A "Youth Union" would sponsor a variety of online events with the goal of empowering young people by increasing career possibilities and training programs, including policy engagement. Companies, both national and international, might express an interest in the social skills they wish young people to learn and might contribute partially or entirely to the training programs. In appreciation of students' commitment, businesses should offer scholarships to those who are actively engaging in the Union. The Union should also make use of an online platform where young graduates teach and mentor the youth and share information about where internships and career opportunities can be found. The platform would address several SDGs, such as, but not limited to: (SDG 1) No poverty; (SDG 3) Good Health and Well-being; (SDG 4) Quality Education; and (SDG 8) Decent Work and Economic Growth.

Encourage **ASEAN and Italy to establish e-government strategies to promote data privacy and data protection via seeking international expertise exchange and financial support.**

Promoting data privacy and transparency in the digital age is paramount. One way to achieve it would be through the establishment of e-government systems where all necessary governmental activities, including voting, banking, and state services, can be conducted online, so to ensure secure digital interactions among citizens, businesses, and governments. To ensure the success of such initiatives, ASEAN and Italy should use international expertise exchange and financial support by collaborating with international organizations, academic institutions, and cybersecurity experts. Furthermore, training and lessons for youth in every geographical location to ensure their access to e-government should be implemented.

Suggest **ASEAN and Italy include digital education programs in students' formal curriculum at all education levels to raise awareness among young people and ensure the safe use of technology.**

Acknowledging the existence of several programs related to digital education, governments should create a new program including different aspects of digital awareness, such as managing online personal information, cyberbullying prevention, and safe Internet use. Such a program would be a free-to-access e-learning platform containing informative short videos, peer-to-peer training sessions – both video-recorded and live –, and contests. It could be kept up to date by integrating the school curricula with specific lessons about digital skills and literacy, intended as the ability to surf the Internet, overcome possible challenges, and manage personal information in a safe and conscious way.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
and International Cooperation

ASEAN YOUTH ORGANIZATION

GLOBAL ACTION