



Bangkok Statement on Autism

We, the representatives of persons with autism, family groups and organizations for persons with autism from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Member States, including Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Viet Nam and Thailand, in total 300 persons, participated in the first ASEAN Autism Congress, from 16 to 17 December 2010 in Bangkok, Thailand.

We sincerely thank the organizers, the Khun Poom Foundation and the Association of Parents of Thai Persons with Autism (AU Thai) in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security of Thailand, the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), with support from the Ministry of Education of Thailand and people of Thailand for their great hospitality and support in the proactive implementation of the Congress.

We declare our collective statement as follows;

1. Various efforts on autism made by relevant stakeholders in the ASEAN region are appreciated to promote understanding of persons with autism and their family members.
2. Central and local governments are encouraged to develop and support any initiative on autism, particularly to establish and strengthen self-help groups/organizations of persons with autism and their family members.
3. Health, education, livelihood, social and empowerment components in the context of community-based inclusive development are critical among persons with autism and their family members. Therefore, ASEAN Member States and multi-stakeholder collaborations are essential in this regard.

Furthermore, we appeal to the Governments of ASEAN Member States and relevant stakeholders to consider the following recommendations to strengthen the autism movement in the ASEAN region;

1. We encourage ASEAN Member States to consider the perspective of autism in the planning, implementation and monitoring of a national policy on disability in line with the principle of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).
2. We agree to the idea of establishing a new decade of persons with disabilities in the Asia-Pacific region (2013-2022) in collaboration with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and APCD by highlighting community-based inclusive development to empower persons of disabilities including persons with autism and their family members.
3. We agree to the idea of establishing the ASEAN Decade of Persons with Disabilities, initiated by the Government of Thailand, to mainstream disability in the development agenda.
4. We acknowledge the establishment of the ASEAN Autism Network (AAN) and recognize its importance to enhance the solidarity and unity among persons with autism and their family members, to lead the autism movement at the grassroots, national, regional and international levels.
5. We call for the ASEAN Member States and relevant partners to support the second ASEAN Autism Congress to be held in Brunei Darussalam in 2012.

Unanimously agreed by all participants at the first ASEAN Autism Congress

17 December 2010