



**THE 45<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
OF ASEAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY  
17-23 October 2024  
Vientiane, Lao PDR**

*The Role of Parliaments in Enhancing Connectivity and  
Inclusive Growth of ASEAN*

(Res.45GA/2024/Eco/04)

**RESOLUTION ON  
THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENT IN PROMOTING ASEAN DIGITAL  
TECHNOLOGICAL INTEGRATION, TOWARDS THE MASTER PLAN  
ON ASEAN CONNECTIVITY 2025 AND BEYOND**

*Sponsored by the Lao PDR*

***The Forty-fifth AIPA General Assembly:***

***Recalling*** the [Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity](#) adopted by ASEAN Leaders in Hanoi, Viet Nam, on 28 October 2010 and [Vientiane Declaration on the Adoption of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity \(MPAC 2025\)](#) adopted in Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic, on 6 September 2016;

***Recognising*** [AIPA Resolution Res.40GA/2019/Eco/03](#) on Improving Digital Connectivity to Support the Growth of MSMEs, adopted at the 40th AIPA General Assembly in Bangkok, Thailand, in 2019, which highlights the importance of digital connectivity as a contributing factor to the development of MSMEs;

***Recalling*** [AIPA Resolution Res.42GA/2021/Eco/01](#) on Promoting Inclusive Digital ASEAN to Empower MSMEs and Strengthen the ASEAN Economic Integration, adopted in Brunei Darussalam in 2021, which called for the acceleration and harmonisation of digital integration across ASEAN; and for more affordable and accessible digital infrastructure and regional consensus on data governance to support the increasing demand for digital connectivity in the region;

***Recalling*** [AIPA Resolution Res.44GA/2023/Eco/04](#) on Promoting Innovation, Transfer, Application and Development of Science and Technology for Sustainable Growth and Development, adopted in Indonesia in 2023, which promotes the transfer of scientific developments and technologies, innovation among ASEAN Member States and from more advanced industrialised countries to the ASEAN region;

***Recalling*** [AIPA Resolution Res.44GA/2023/WAIPA/03](#) on Digital Transformation Led by Women and for Women, adopted in Indonesia in 2023, which promotes women and girls' participation in digital transformation and encourages ASEAN women parliamentarians to actively assist in the development of relevant legal frameworks to accelerate the digital transformation process in ASEAN Member States;

***Recalling further*** [AIPA Resolution Res.44GA/2023/YPA/01](#) on Advancing Youth Engagement for Inclusive Development, Economic Transformation, and Democratic

Participation adopted in Indonesia in 2023, which calls upon AIPA Member Parliaments to enact and ensure the effective implementation of legislation that supports and promotes youth entrepreneurship in the digital economy, especially in providing a conducive environment for innovation and growth;

**Acknowledging** the progress made towards the [MPAC 2025](#), which aims to achieve a seamlessly and comprehensively connected and integrated ASEAN that will promote competitiveness, inclusiveness, and a greater sense of community and the ongoing development of the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan (ACSP) as part of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045, which aims to build on the achievements and lessons learned from [MPAC 2025](#), ensuring continued progress in regional integration and connectivity;

**Recalling** the [ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint 2025](#), which aims to create a deeply integrated and highly cohesive ASEAN economy, and the [ASEAN Digital Masterplan 2025](#), which envisions ASEAN as a leading digital community and economic bloc;

**Recognising** the importance of digital technology in driving economic growth, innovation, and competitiveness within the ASEAN region, and the significant progress made by ASEAN Member States in expanding digital infrastructure and promoting digital literacy and skills;

**Noting** the challenges that remain in achieving equitable digital access across the region, the lack of digital literacy among end-users, infrastructure investment, and a harmonised approach across ASEAN are key barriers to achieving the goal of [ASEAN Digital Masterplan 2025](#) and beyond;

**Acknowledging** the efforts to negotiate and support the timely conclusion of the ASEAN Digital Economy Framework (DEFA), which aims to be the most comprehensive and leading digital economy agreement in the region;

**Emphasising** the role of parliamentarians in creating an enabling environment for digital technological integration through their legislative, oversight, and representation functions;

**Reiterating** the crucial roles of Parliaments to promote the harmonisation of policies and legislation that support ASEAN economic digital integration, which prioritises connectivity, regional integration, and narrowing the development gaps among ASEAN Member States, especially in sub-regions and remote areas;

**Acknowledging** the ongoing efforts to negotiate and support the conclusion of the ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA) as the region's most comprehensive digital economy agreement while emphasising its importance in advancing a modern strategy for an ASEAN Digital Economy that enables seamless and secure flows of goods, services, and data, underpinned by strong regulations, infrastructure, and skilled talent.

**Hereby resolves to:**

**Call upon** AIPA Member Parliaments to prioritise the enactment of legislation that supports the goals of the [MPAC 2025](#) and beyond, ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA) and beyond, particularly in the areas of digital literacy, digital infrastructure and cybersecurity;

**Encourage** AIPA Member Parliaments to advocate for policies that incentivise investment in and the protection of digital infrastructure, such as broadband connectivity, leverage technology to improve connectivity and access, particularly in underserved areas;

**Call for** AIPA Member Parliaments to promote initiatives aimed at improving digital connectivity across ASEAN, ensuring that all Member States have access to reliable and affordable internet services;

**Encourage** AIPA Member Parliaments and ASEAN Member States to strengthen capacity-building initiatives for parliaments, government officials, businesses, and the general public to enhance digital literacy and skills, ensuring widespread digital inclusion, foster knowledge-sharing platforms and exchange of best practices to help accelerate digital transformation and address challenges;

**Urge** AIPA Member Parliaments to foster ASEAN Member States to promote digital integration initiatives and robust cybersecurity frameworks; adopt comprehensive data protection laws that safeguard citizens across the region; and emphasise inclusive digital technological integration that bridges the digital divide and leaves no one behind;

**Encourage** AIPA Member Parliaments to promote gender equality, women's empowerment and youth engagement in the digital sector and innovation through STEM education, digital skills training, support for start-up ecosystems, youth-led digital initiatives, women-led and women-for initiative digital entrepreneurship, and leadership roles in the tech industry;

**Urge** AIPA Member Parliaments to encourage ASEAN Member States to collaborate among private sectors, Development Partners and the ASEAN Infrastructure Fund for providing capacity building, technical and financial assistance to implement the digital integration initiatives;

**Recommend** AIPA Member Parliaments to strengthen their oversight roles in the implementation of laws and regulations by identifying unnecessary regulatory barriers that hinder initiatives towards digital integration and evaluating these initiatives to ensure digital integration achievement and alignment with the goals of the [MPAC 2025](#) and beyond.

Adopted on the twenty-first day of October 2024 in Vientiane, Lao PDR.



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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

**RESOLUTION ON THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENT IN PROMOTING  
ASEAN DIGITAL TECHNOLOGICAL INTEGRATION, TOWARDS THE  
MASTER PLAN ON ASEAN CONNECTIVITY 2025 AND BEYOND**

We are in a transformative era where digital technology and innovation are fundamental to economic growth and sustainable development. As ASEAN nations pursue the [Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025](#), it is imperative for parliaments to play a pivotal role in promoting digital technological integration. This integration is crucial for enhancing regional connectivity, fostering economic growth, and improving the quality of life for all ASEAN citizens.

Digital technological integration within ASEAN involves harmonising digital infrastructures, policies, and regulations across Member States. This harmonisation is essential for creating a seamless digital environment that supports efficient communication, trade, and innovation. Key to this integration is the development of a robust digital infrastructure that includes high-speed internet connectivity, data centres, and interoperable systems across borders. By establishing these foundational elements, ASEAN can ensure that all member states have access to the technological resources needed to participate fully in the digital economy.

Furthermore, digital integration requires the alignment of cybersecurity measures to protect data and maintain the integrity of digital transactions. With the increasing prevalence of cyber threats, it is vital for ASEAN countries to collaborate on cybersecurity standards and practices. This will involve sharing information on potential threats, developing joint response strategies, and investing in advanced security technologies. By working together, ASEAN can create a secure digital environment that fosters trust and encourages greater digital interaction among its members.

Another critical aspect of digital technological integration is the promotion of digital trade. This includes the development of policies and frameworks that facilitate cross-border e-commerce and digital payments. By reducing barriers to digital trade, such as differing regulations and standards, ASEAN can enable businesses to expand their markets and consumers to access a wider range of products and services. This not only boosts economic growth but also enhances the region's competitiveness on a global scale.

The [MPAC 2025](#) sets out a comprehensive vision for achieving greater regional integration through enhanced physical, institutional, and people-to-people connectivity.

Digital technological integration is a key component of this plan, as it supports the development of a digitally connected ASEAN that can respond to the demands of the 21st century. The Master Plan outlines several strategic objectives, including the development of digital infrastructure, the enhancement of digital innovation and entrepreneurship, and the promotion of digital skills and literacy.

To achieve these objectives, the Master Plan emphasises the need for investment in digital infrastructure projects, such as expanding broadband networks. These projects are designed to improve connectivity within and between ASEAN Member States, making it easier for people and businesses to communicate and collaborate. Additionally, the Master Plan calls for the creation of an enabling environment for digital innovation, which includes supporting start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in the digital sector. By fostering a culture of innovation, ASEAN can drive technological advancements that benefit the entire region.

Moreover, the Master Plan highlights the importance of developing digital skills and literacy among ASEAN citizens. This involves not only providing education and training in digital technologies but also ensuring that all segments of society have access to digital tools and resources. By promoting digital inclusivity, ASEAN can ensure that the benefits of digital transformation are shared widely, contributing to more equitable and sustainable development.

Parliaments have a strategic role in promoting digital technological integration toward the [MPAC 2025](#). They are responsible for enacting supportive legislation, providing oversight, and ensuring that digital policies align with national and regional goals. Through regular oversight and accountability mechanisms, parliaments can monitor progress, address challenges, and ensure that digital projects deliver tangible benefits to citizens. By championing regional cooperation initiatives, parliaments can facilitate the sharing of best practices, knowledge, and resources, driving the digital transformation necessary for a connected and prosperous ASEAN region.