

40TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE ASEAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY 25 - 30 AUGUST 2019 BANGKOK, THAILAND

Advancing Parliamentary Partnership for Sustainable Community

(Res 40GA/2019/ECO/03)

RESOLUTION ON IMPROVING DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY TO SUPPORT THE GROWTH OF MSMEs

The Fortieth AIPA General Assembly:

Recalling AIPA resolution RES.37GA/2016/ECO/02 on "Strengthening the Growth of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Entering and Optimizing the Global Value Chains by Improving Access to Finance and Technology, and Enhancing Productivity and Innovation", adopted at the 37th AIPA General Assembly in Myanmar;

Recalling AIPA resolution RES.38GA/2017/ECO/03 on "Promoting an Inclusive and Innovation-led Growth for the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC)" adopted during the 38th AIPA General Assembly in the Philippines;

Further recalling AIPA resolution RES.39GA/2018/ECON/02 on "Promoting Innovation and E-Commerce in ASEAN", adopted on the 39th AIPA General Assembly in Singapore;

Reaffirming connectivity as one of the five interrelated and mutually reinforcing characteristic of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprint 2025, that supports the AEC Vision as envisaged in the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, which consists of: (1) A Highly Integrated and Cohesive Economy; (2) A Competitive, Innovative, and Dynamic ASEAN; (3) Enhanced Connectivity and Sectoral Cooperation; (4) A Resilient, Inclusive, People-Oriented, and People-Centered ASEAN; and (5) A Global ASEAN;

Recognizing the important role of MSMEs as the backbone of ASEAN's diverse and dynamic economy where it contributes significantly to economic growth, sustainability, and narrowing economic differences among Member States through the creation of job opportunities, MSMEs also promote the local wisdom, encourage the innovation of entrepreneurs and among MSMEs;

Knowing that through the improvement of digital connectivity MSMEs would be able to access knowledge and technologies to improve competitiveness and have a better chance to grow, as digital connectivity would provide an easier access to markets and consumers through e-commerce platform;

Acknowledging that MSMEs adoption of digital technologies will allow them to achieve significant uplift in productivity, efficiency, and market expansion within the region, as identified in the ASEAN Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2016-2025;

Recognizing that compared to other key economic players such as large firms and companies, MSMEs are still left behind in terms of digital connectivity. Hence, supporting the digitalization of MSMEs is important to avoid negative impact to MSMEs businesses that could further hinder the growth of ASEAN economy;

Hereby resolves to:

Encourage AIPA Member Countries to identify and amend their national laws and regulations as necessary to support the distribution of technological infrastructure requires by MSMEs to improve digital connectivity;

Call upon AIPA Member Countries to contribute to the development of a broad range of policies that are encouraging investment; integrating micro, small, and medium enterprises in the digital economy; and promoting competitiveness and innovation;

Call upon AIPA Members to urge their governments in improving digital infrastructure requires to support the improvement of digital connectivity such as; Internet access, network affordability and interoperability, promote affordable and universal broadband access, and develop an enabling and competitive environment with pro-investment policies for the development of digital infrastructure;

Encourage AIPA Members to urge their governments to provide financial support and work with business sector to support the regional digital trade connectivity initiated by ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ASEAN-BAC) which will help to increase ASEAN trade and support the development of MSMEs;

Call for AIPA Members to urge their governments to improve access to information on digital technologies for MSMEs owners and senior managers, as well as making it available in local languages for better understanding. Also to Provides training and education programs that encourage learning and mentoring.