

ASEAN Competition Conferences

The conclusion of the 5th ASEAN Competition Conference (ACC) in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, on 4-5 June 2015, has now firmly established the ACC as ASEAN's flagship annual event on competition policy and law. Over the five years since the first ACC was held in Bali in November 2011, the conference has grown to support discussion of key and emerging competition issues, focusing on those confronting ASEAN. The conference is now a central platform for discussion and networking among competition-related authorities and stakeholders both within and outside the ASEAN region.

These ASEAN conferences have succeeded in bringing together expert presenters on competition policy and law, including from the OECD, World Bank, ASEAN Member States, Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, New Zealand Commerce Commission, United States Federal Trade Commission, Japan Fair Trade Commission, Korea Fair Trade Commission, European Commission, and other international public and private organisations involved with competition policy and law (CPL).

Since its inception, ASEAN has worked to ensure conference themes and outcomes of discussions contribute to, and inform, efforts within ASEAN to realise its region-wide goals for competition, including to foster a competition-aware region. Closed door meetings following conference sessions have helped ASEAN to draw out conclusions and recommendations to be taken forward through ASEAN expert group processes.

ASEAN Competition Conferences 2011 - 2015

Date	Venue	Theme
5th June 2015	Ho Chi Minh City	Advancing Competition Policy and Law Post-2015: Progress, Opportunities and Challenges
4th July 2014	Manila	Building Blocks for Effective Enforcement of Competition Policy and Law
3rd July 2013	Singapore	Regional Integration of ASEAN Competition Policy and Law
2nd Sept 2012	Ho Chi Minh City	Mergers and Acquisitions: Impacts on ASEAN
1st Nov 2011	Bali	Fostering the Promotion of Competition Policy and Regional Development

5th ASEAN Competition Conference:

“Advancing Competition Policy and Law Post-2015: Progress, Opportunities and Challenges”

At this year's conference, 180 participants, comprising government officials, the business sector and academia, heard from 24 competition law experts from 13 different countries on emerging issues and challenges in the future ASEAN competition landscape.

Over two days, participants explored issues surrounding:

- the importance of fostering and generating competition awareness,
- competitive neutrality to maintain a level playing field between public and private enterprise,
- interfaces between competition and consumer protection,
- building a regional knowledge hub in ASEAN,
- enhancing regional enforcement cooperation on CPL.

The 2015 ACC drew particular attention to the significant progress made by ASEAN Member States in developing competition laws since the launch of the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint. The challenges facing young competition agencies, such as transparency, independence, cooperation, advocacy, and attracting and retaining qualified staff, however, remain considerable. The importance of building and sustaining dialogue and cooperation between competition experts and agencies was reaffirmed at the event.

4th ASEAN Competition Conference

With the theme ‘Building Blocks for Effective Enforcement of CPL’, the 2014 ACC brought together competition experts and public-private stakeholders to discuss the various strategies on innovative approaches for detecting and deterring anti-competitive conduct, ways to enhance national competition agencies, as well as options to strengthen international cooperation.

3rd ASEAN Competition Conference

The 2013 ACC, with the theme ‘Regional Integration of ASEAN Competition Policy and Law’, provided a platform for competition experts and relevant stakeholders to take stock of the emergence of competition law regimes across ASEAN Member States, explore challenges facing businesses in complying with various competition law regimes across ASEAN, review possible approaches to regional integration models, and examine the role of international cooperation in facilitating integration.



“Competition policy and law will become increasingly important in underpinning economic growth and integration in ASEAN” and that “a strong competition regime enhances efficient market conduct and promotes overall productivity and competitiveness of markets in the region”. - **H.E. Mr. Lim Hng Kiang**, Minister for Trade and Industry of Singapore.

2nd ASEAN Competition Conference

The 2012 ACC was focused on the topic of ‘Mergers and Acquisitions (M&A): Impacts on ASEAN’ and was attended by competition experts from several competition agencies, private sector, academia and research institutes. The conference deliberated on international experiences and issues relating to M&A, development of an M&A review model in ASEAN both for businesses and government, the current M&A activity in the ASEAN region, as well as the prospects for M&A activity in the coming years.

1st ASEAN Competition Conference

The 2011 ACC was dedicated to ‘Fostering the Promotion of Competition Policy and Regional Development’. Its main objective was to achieve regional acceptance on the importance of competition policy from various stakeholders. It was recognised that such acceptance and support would be necessary to foster and accelerate the process of adopting and strengthening CPL in the region. Topics covered at the conference, among others, included: the benefits of CPL to consumers, comparisons of competition regimes, economic growth and development, support to SMEs and employment creation, experiences gained in adopting and implementing CPL, and the challenges in introducing CPL in ASEAN Member States.

Support for ASEAN Competition Conferences

ACCs are co-organised by the ASEAN Secretariat, ASEAN Expert Group on Competition (AEGC) and the host country’s competition authority. Support from the AANZFTA Economic Cooperation Support Program has been provided for hosting of all five conferences, with additional support also provided by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH for the 1st, 4th and 5th ACCs.

The 6th and 7th ACCs are scheduled to be convened in 2016 and 2017 in Thailand and Malaysia, respectively. The theme of the 6th ACC will be ‘To Advance Cartel Detection and Enforcement & Leniency Programmes in the Cross-Border Context’, while the 7th ACC will deliberate on ‘Outreach and Advocacy Strategies: How to Communicate with the Public, Academics and Non-governmental agencies on CPL’.

Read more:

<http://www.asean.org/news/asean-secretariat-news/item/asean-respond-to-emerging-competition-landscape-beyond-2015>

<http://www.asean.org/communities/asean-economic-community/category/competition-policy>

<http://aanzfta.asean.org/index.php?page=competition-policy>



“Under the pillar of a competitive ASEAN, the main objective of competition policy is to foster a culture of fair competition and to establish institutions and laws related to competition policy.” - **Mr Penn Sovicheat**, AEGC Chair and Director General, Domestic Trade Directorate, Ministry of Commerce of Cambodia at the 5th ASEAN Competition Conference on 4 May 2015.

“The development and enforcement of competition law and policy to ensure a fair competition environment for enterprises is one of the crucial issues for governments. To overcome this challenge, in combination with the completion of the legal framework in each nation, the competition agencies in ASEAN may need to have a unified and effective enforcement regime so as to protect the common interests of enterprise, community and consumers on ASEAN.” - **H.E. Tran Tuan Anh**, Vice-Minister of the Ministry of Industry and Trade of Vietnam.