



ONE ASEAN ONE RESPONSE

# ABOUT THE AHA CENTRE

One ASEAN, One Response

## DISASTERS RISKS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Southeast Asia is located in one of the most disaster-prone regions of the world and is exposed to almost all types of natural hazards, including tsunamis, earthquakes, floods, typhoons, cyclones, droughts, landslides, and volcanic eruptions. Between 2004 and 2014, Southeast Asian region recorded more than 50% of the total global disaster fatalities or 354,000 of the 700,000 deaths in disasters worldwide. Moreover, the disasters have also led to a total economic loss of approximately US\$91 billion. Therefore, collective multi-stakeholders partnerships are required to enhance preparedness and reduce risks in the region. Following the Indian Ocean Tsunami in 2004 and Cyclone Nargis in 2008, Heads of States/Governments of ASEAN countries emphasised the importance of transnational action in responding to disasters – as well as undertaking preventive measures. Hence, the idea of establishing a regional disaster management centre was conceptualised.



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## WHO IS THE AHA CENTRE?

The ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre) is an intergovernmental organisation, established by the ten ASEAN Member States with the aim to facilitate cooperation and coordination of disaster management amongst ASEAN Member States. The Agreement on the Establishment of the AHA Centre was signed by ASEAN Foreign Ministers on 17 November 2011, and witnessed by the Heads of States/Governments of all ten ASEAN countries. In operationalising its mandate, the AHA Centre primarily works with the National Disaster Management Organisations (NDMOs) of the ASEAN Member States. Furthermore, the AHA Centre also partners with international organisations, private sector, and civil society organisations, such as the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the United Nations, and AADMER Partnership Group.

Multilateral cooperation has been also established with ASEAN Dialogue/ Development/ Sectoral Partners, including Australia, China, European Union, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, Switzerland, and the United States of America. In the event of large-scale disasters, such as 2013 Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, the AHA Centre works closely with the Secretary – General of ASEAN who will perform the role as the ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance Coordinator to mobilise more resources and coordinate with ASEAN Leaders and partners worldwide.



## MANDATES OF THE AHA CENTRE

Although the organisation was officially launched in 2011, the mandates of the AHA Centre had been formulated earlier in the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER). The document serves as a regional framework for cooperation, coordination, technical assistance, and resource mobilisation in all aspects of disaster management. AADMER affirms ASEAN's commitment to the Hyogo Framework of Action (HFA) and is the first legally-binding HFA related instrument in the world. Signed by the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN in Vientiane, Lao PDR, in July 2005, the Agreement has been ratified by all ten Member States and entered into force on 24 December 2009.

Under the AADMER, the AHA Centre is tasked to facilitate cooperation and coordination among the ASEAN Member States, and with relevant United Nations and International Organisations, in promoting collaboration in disaster management.

Furthermore, the AHA Centre reports its progress and activities to the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) on a regular basis. The ACDM members consists of heads of NDMOs of the ten ASEAN Member States who serve as the Governing Board of the AHA Centre. Additionally, there are two high-level commitments that re-affirm the role of the AHA Centre as the primary ASEAN regional coordinating agency on disaster management and emergency response:



### The ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN One Response: ASEAN Responding to Disasters as One in the Region and Outside the Region

Signed by the Heads of States/Governments of all ASEAN Member States on 6 September 2016, the Declaration reinforces ASEAN's commitment in engaging various sectors and stakeholders to accelerate the speed, scale, and solidarity in responding to large-scale disasters in the region. Furthermore, it also expands the AHA Centre's mandate to enable ASEAN to respond to disasters outside the region, at a later stage.



### ASEAN Vision 2025 on Disaster Management

Adopted by the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management in December 2015, it confirms the role of the AHA Centre to become a network coordinator of regional centres for excellence in disaster management and emergency response. The Vision outlines three focus areas; institutionalisation and communications, partnerships and innovation, finance and resource mobilisations.



## THE ROLES OF THE AHA CENTRE:

In general, the AHA Centre classifies its activities into Disaster Monitoring and Preparedness Response. Specifically, the roles of the AHA Centre are further specified in the AADMER Work Programme 2016-2020 as well as the AHA Centre Work Plan 2020. The AHA Centre's office also houses the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC), which serves as the central location in monitoring disasters and coordinating ASEAN's collective response to disasters.



### MISSION

To facilitate and coordinate ASEAN's effort in reducing disaster losses and responding to disaster emergencies as ONE, through regional collaboration, national leadership and global partnership in disaster management.



### VISION

A highly professional and trusted organisation which serves as the coordinating agency in the ASEAN region for disaster management and emergency response that aims to make ASEAN as a global leader on disaster management by 2025.

For further details on the information contained in this publication, please contact :

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