

The ASC-ICT Roundtable: The Curtain Coming Down



(From right) Dr Emmanuel Lallana, CEO of Ideacorp, Dr Pavin Chachavalpongpun, ISEAS-ASC Fellow with other participants attending the KL Roundtable on e-Governance, 13 May 2010

The final roundtable on “ASEAN 2.0: ICT, Governance and Community in Southeast Asia”, a project jointly organised by the ASEAN Studies Centre, ISEAS, and IdeaCorp of the Philippines, came to an end, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in the afternoon of 13 May 2010. Malaysia’s Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) was co-sponsor of this roundtable.

Through the past five weeks, ASC and Ideacorp travelled to all 10 ASEAN countries to organise these meaningful roundtables on ICT. And the journey just

ended in Kuala Lumpur. In this roundtable, ASC and Ideacorp invited a number of participants, including from Malaysia Communications and Multimedia Commission, Ministry of Science, Technology & Innovation, and the Association of the Computer and Multimedia Industry Malaysia (PIKOM).

The participants agreed that ASEAN’s success in regional integration and community building was partly dependent on its ability to harness ICT in the following areas: *policy coordination, inclusive regionalism, creating a regional identity, and transforming the secretariat from secretary to network manager*. In the last area, Dr Lallana, CEO of IdeaCorp stressed that the presence of a coordinating agency or a network manager produced better outcomes for networked organizations; hence this would help promote the process of ASEAN integration.

The participants also agreed that “ICT infrastructure” needed to be built and that ASEAN’s own applications should be hosted in the region. Currently, ASEAN is using applications hosted outside the region. This explains, they said, why the cost of ICT is still high in this part of the world. Some raised the issues of privacy and security, of how to promote “green ICT” (using more ICT and less paper), and of how to strengthen the partnership between public and private sectors to make sure that the use of ICT will serve well the needs of the people as much as the governments.

The Kuala Lumpur roundtable wrapped up the ICT series. ASC will produce a publication based on the findings of the meetings. We will make a public announcement once the publication is complete.