



ASEAN Roundtable on Skills for a Digital Age

Virtual. Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam

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PRESS RELEASE

29 September 2021 - The ASEAN Business Advisory Council today hosted the ASEAN Roundtable on Skills for a Digital Age 2021. Around 800 participants from across Southeast Asia and beyond registered to attend the virtual discussions that featured senior figures and experts from both the public and private sector. This official event, under Brunei's Chairmanship of ASEAN, provided a greater understanding of how technology and digital transformation is changing the future of work and discussed ways to ensure that the ASEAN workforce has the necessary skills for a digital future.

Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Hamzah bin Haji Sulaiman, Minister of Education of Brunei Darussalam delivered the opening keynote address and noted that 'equipping society for a digital future relies on the development of the younger generation and providing them with relevant skills and knowledge in this digital era'. Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Hamzah bin Haji Sulaiman went on to stress that digital skills has become as important as numeracy and language and highlighted the importance in ensuring that teachers are trained and developed with 21st century skills. Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Hamzah bin Haji Sulaiman concluded by saying 'I believe with strong commitment and enhanced collaborations, we can strive together to achieve better towards preparing and providing the relevant competencies, knowledge and employability for society in our quest for the digital transformation, for a better ASEAN and world of work'.

The Roundtable saw the launch of the ASEAN Business Advisory Council Brunei's legacy project called HIRED which stands for 'Harnessing Impact with Resilient Employability Digitally'. YB Siti Rozaimeriyanty DSLJ Rahman, Chair of the ASEAN Business Advisory Council said "HIRED is designed to address the issue of unemployment and also respond to the need for ASEAN to reskill and upskill its workforce. This has become even more so critical and timely now due to the impact of the pandemic as we hope to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) particularly Goal number 4 on Quality Education and Goal number 8 on decent work and economic growth'. She went on to note 'Together we can collectively Recover – Stronger –and build a resilient workforce for a sustainable ASEAN digital future – SAMA SAMA'.

In her Special Remarks, Hajah Farida Dato Talib, Managing Director and CEO of Brunei LNG, a Lead Partner to the ASEAN Business series noted that "As the longest running LNG Plant in the world, innovation and digitalisation is, and has always been, a core part of our operations. It is not something we have only just started. It is something we have been consistently working and improving on throughout the years".

Other prominent speakers included His Excellency Satvinder Singh, Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for ASEAN Economic Community, the British Prime Minister's



Trade Envoy to Brunei, Myanmar and Thailand as well senior figures from the ASEAN Future Work Force Council, Asian Development Bank, Baiduri Bank, Brunei LNG, Google Cloud, McLarty Associates, Michael Page, Shell and Solve Education!.

The roundtable featured two panel discussions. The first panel discussion on **The Future of Work** looked at how innovation and business transformation is changing the world of work and how employees operate. The discussions explored some of the permanent changes in the work place caused by Covid-19 and how the ASEAN workforce needs to respond.

The second panel discussed the topic of **Skills for a Digital Age**. The panel explored the changing nature of work and identified the skills gaps in Southeast Asia and discussed on how we can best prepare for the changing skills needs across ASEAN. The role of education and lifelong learning in ensuring a workforce ready for the needs of industry was also deliberated.

The Roundtable was part of a series of events organised under Brunei's Chairmanship of ASEAN. The next event will be the ASEAN Business and Investment Summit on 25th October.