

Report on the 2nd ASEAN Autism Network (AAN) Congress held in Brunei on 27-29 April 2013.

Background

AAN is made up of representatives of persons with autism, family groups and organisations for persons with autism from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member states. It was established at the Inaugural General Assembly of AAN in Bangkok, Thailand in December 2010, with the theme '*Family Comes First*'. The AAN Secretariat is located in Bangkok Asia-Pacific Development Centre on Disability (APCD) where AAN Secretary-General Mr Akiie Ninomiya (also ED of APCD) is based. AAN works closely with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and UNESCAP.

Executive Committee members are made up of 10 representatives, 1 from each of the ASEAN member state. The outgoing Chairman (Mr Chusak Janthayanond from Thailand) has been replaced by En. Malai Abdullah Othman (President & CEO of SMARTER Brunei), who will hold the Chair from 2013-2015, and subsequently to be succeeded by Mr Teh Beng Choon of Malaysia (2015-2017). As per AAN established protocol, the 3rd AAN Congress will be hosted by Malaysia in the last week of May 2015.

2nd AAN Congress

- Jointly organised by the Community Development Department, Ministry of Culture, Youth & Sports; Special Education Unit, Ministry of Education; Child Development Centre, Ministry of Health; ASEAN Section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Society for the Management of Autism Related Issues in Training, Education & Resources (SMARTER) Brunei
- Theme: '*Towards Autism Friendly, ASEAN community*'
- Venue: Rizqun International Hotel, Brunei

Highlights:

- Pre-Congress Workshop: "Giving Persons with Autism a V.O.I.C.E. (using Visual and Oral tools to Interact and Communicate Effectively)
- 1st ASEAN Autism Youth Camp, 26-27 April 2013, Taman Rekreasi Hutan Berakas
- Visits to SMARTER Brunei autism centres
- ASEAN Autism Awareness Exhibition, in conjunction with the Launch of the AAN Congress by HRH Prince Azim of Brunei
- Key Note Address: "Strategic planning in managing the "Tsunami" of newly diagnosed individuals with autism"- delivered by Executive Director of APCD, Mr Akiie Ninomiya.
- Charity Gala Night: *Project Oddy's Quest* – A Fashion Theatre
- Handing over of banner to next hosting nation (Malaysia)

Sessions:

1. Creating our own affordable & sustainable intervention programme using local resources
2. Ensuring a guaranteed intervention programme that will be accessible to all
3. Core skills for C.H.I.P.S (Contributing, Holistic, Independent, Productive & Successful)
4. Creative arts: Discovering their amazing talents
5. Inclusive education for students with autism in Thailand: A case study of Kasetsart University
6. Country reports
7. Drafting of resolution

Submitted by:
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