Empowering ASEAN 4.0: Implications of Industry 4.0 for Skills Development Strategies of Business and Industry

Bangkok, 20 March 2019 – Today, more than 100 business and industry representatives from all 10 ASEAN member states gather in Bangkok to explore strategies to reskill and upskill the region's workforce to make ASEAN fit for Industry 4.0. The symposium on the topic "Empowering ASEAN 4.0: Implications of Industry 4.0 for Skills Development Strategies of Business and Industry" is jointly organised by the ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ASEAN-BAC) in cooperation with the German government's Regional Cooperation Programme in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (RECOTVET).

The fourth industrial revolution, also referred to as Industry 4.0, is expected to significantly transform the economies and societies of ASEAN. The adoption of new technologies is going to increase productivity and displace workers from certain jobs. But it will also create new jobs. As labour markets are shifting, ASEAN economies are under increasing pressure.

The symposium offers a platform to understand more in-depth how labour markets of ASEAN are expected to shift in the future, the consequences this will have for the skills development strategies of companies, and the role of public-private partnerships in addressing the reskilling challenge. The participants discuss recently published analytical data on the future of jobs as well as practical examples of companies that are already investing in skills training for the future.

Opening the symposium, Mr. Arin Jira, Chairman of ASEAN-BAC conveys that "this symposium has been an effort of ASEAN-BAC in propelling the readiness of ASEAN towards the 4th Industrial Revolution". He calls for the adoption of a regional approach in ASEAN to navigate the 4th Industrial Revolution and urges all stakeholders to "prepare for the new chapter of technological development and enhance cooperation in upgrading human capital".

Mr. Jan Scheer, Deputy Head of Mission of the German Embassy in Thailand underlines "how important the leadership by the private sector has been for the successful implementation of strategic solutions in Germany", and explains that "employers not only need to upgrade and re-skill their current employees. They need to start recruiting for Industry 4.0 and engage in strategic workforce planning to prepare for technological shifts in their industries".

The symposium is one of several activities that explore the challenges and opportunities of Industry 4.0 for human resource development, organised by ASEAN-BAC during Thailand's chairmanship of ASEAN. The activities will culminate in the legacy project 'ASEAN Human Empowerment and Development' (AHEAD). In cooperation with the German government's RECOTVET programme, ASEAN-BAC will also introduce a skills development award in this year's ASEAN Business Award. The award will be officially launched by June 2019.

For more information, please visit: https://www.aseanbac2019.org