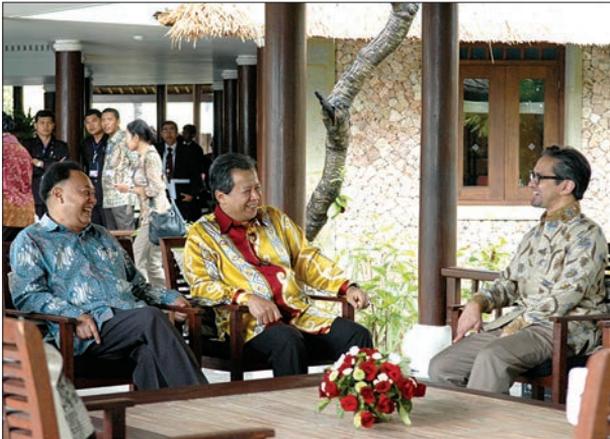




A meeting of minds ■ Discussions in informal settings often provide the most conducive conditions to reach consensus. At an informal ASEAN retreat in Lombok, Indonesia, January 2011, the year of Indonesia's chairmanship of ASEAN, with Singapore Foreign Minister George Yeo, Lao Deputy PM/Foreign Minister Thongloun Sisoulith and Cambodian Deputy PM/Foreign Minister Hor Nam Hong.



Lighter side of things ■ Malaysian Foreign Minister Anifah Aman and Foreign Minister of Thailand Kasit Piromya at the 2011 ASEAN Foreign Ministers Retreat in Lombok, Indonesia.

The art of listening ■ An underappreciated aspect of diplomacy. With Myanmar Foreign Minister Nyan Win at the January 2011 ASEAN retreat, deliberating on how to manage Myanmar's wish to chair ASEAN in 2014 and ASEAN's common interests.





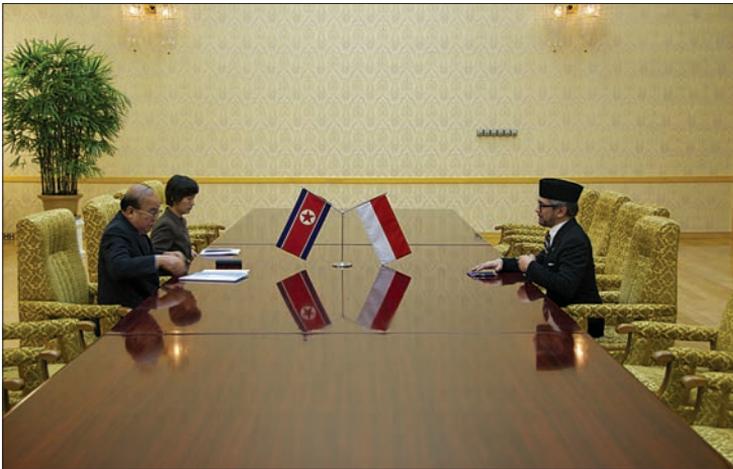
Conditions conducive ■ Much against conventional ASEAN practice, I deliberately set the room for the 2011 ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Retreat in Lombok in an informal and compact setting, to encourage more interactive discussions. The absence of large conference tables avoids huge volumes of documents!



Lockstep ■ Formal ASEAN meetings are invariably preceded by the walk from the "holding room" to the conference hall, often providing a last opportunity, discreetly while under the glare of the media, for views to be made before the formality of the open meetings takes over. *ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Bali, Indonesia in 2013 under the chairmanship of the Foreign Minister of Brunei Darussalam, Prince Mohamed Bolkiah.*



“Informal-informal” ■ A not often recognized benefit of the ARF is that it makes possible seemingly impromptu informal exchanges between deeply divided parties. *The 2011 ARF Foreign Ministers’ meeting in Bali, or more accurately at the “holding room” where ministers gather before the official dinner, made possible brief informal exchanges between the Foreign Minister of the DPRK, Pak Ui-chun, and the Foreign Minister of the ROK, Kim Sung-hwan, with other ministers also in the room, no doubt aware of the exchanges taking place, which subsequently led to the resumption of talks between the parties on the Korean Peninsula issues. Having guided the ministers to exchange greetings, I left them be.*



“Informal” meeting ■ To make a difference, ASEAN must be inclusive in providing a forum for the management of some of the most intractable of the region’s challenges. During an official visit to Pyongyang in October 2013, I managed to persuade the Foreign Minister of the DPRK, Pak Ui-chun, to conduct our discussions in an as informal a setting as possible, without the accompaniment of large delegations, except the lone interpreter, in order to facilitate a more frank and candid discussion. As is my preference in such settings, though clearly more formal than in some other capitals, I dispensed with formal documents, save for a little notepad.



Waging peace ■ The Informal ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Jakarta, 22 February 2011, barely ten days after the outbreak of border incidents between Cambodia and Thailand, and following my shuttle diplomacy to Bangkok and Phnom Penh — as well as the formal (closed) meeting of the UN Security Council to consider the issue — was of immense importance. It was groundbreaking in setting the practice of ASEAN engagement on conflict situations involving its own member states. By demonstrating ASEAN's capacity to manage the region's affairs, it allowed the UN Security Council to rally around the region's efforts at peace making. I contemplated the idea of having the meeting at the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta — to demonstrate ASEAN's coming of age — but decided against it lest it upset the fine equilibrium I had managed to secure between a bilateral and regional approach to conflict management/resolution. The meeting was convened at the Gedung Pancasila within the compound of the Indonesian Foreign Ministry instead. Prior to and after the meeting, some ASEAN member states posed the question of whether the meeting constituted the Council foreseen in the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC). I suggested that perhaps there are advantages in some degree of “constructive ambiguity”; to allow each member state to define for itself the nature of the meeting. For me, what was key was the timely engagement of ASEAN. *The photograph above illustrates the plenary setting. As is ASEAN practice, the seating was in accordance to alphabetical principle and the sequence of the rotating ASEAN chairmanship. As has been my preference, I opted for a close-knit setting. Given the proximity of the delegations, the microphones were hardly needed!*



ASEAN way? ■ As is common ASEAN practice, meetings are preceded by a group photo. This time, notwithstanding the all-around smiles, I detected a notable mood of anxiety as ASEAN Foreign Ministers and representatives began the informal meeting that would take up the Cambodia–Thailand issue.



Any subjects except ■ Time for pleasantries and small talk on topics except the core issue at hand. In the “holding room” prior to the meeting, Singapore’s Foreign Minister George Yeo was adept in responding to my small talk, to break what would otherwise be a rather awkward silence. I did not recall deeply discussing issues of substance during the lunch, since I was rather more intent on creating a climate conducive for the meeting proper to come.

“Send it to the Foreign

Ministers!” ■ A once familiar refrain when diplomatic deadlocks mired ASEAN at the Heads of State or senior officials levels.

On the Cambodia–Thailand border disputes in 2011, I was fortunate to have as interlocutors, Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Hor Namhong and Thailand Foreign Minister Kasit Piromya. Both equally robust and principled in defending and promoting their countries’ interests and position, and yet gave sufficient room for the path of diplomacy and peaceful resolution to take hold. All throughout, I made it a priority to earn their trust to serve as facilitator.

With the Foreign Ministers of Cambodia and Thailand at the conclusion of the informal ASEAN Foreign Ministers’ meeting in Jakarta on 22 February 2011.





Common solution ■ Barely a day after the conclusion of the 18th ASEAN Summit, the three foreign ministers informally met again at the Gedung Pancasila, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia. As has been my preference, the setting was aimed at creating a conducive atmosphere for interactive and candid exchanges of view — without accompanying delegation members.

Words matter ■ The 45th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMM) in Phnom Penh on 9–13 July 2012 will always be etched in my memory. Despite unrelenting efforts by all concerned, consensus on the South China Sea elements of the Chairman’s Statement continued to elude and, for the first time, an AMM did not conclude with the customary Chairman’s Statement that would incorporate the broad range of ASEAN cooperation. ASEAN consensus on the South China Sea was restored days after, following my thirty-six-hour shuttle diplomacy and communications with ASEAN foreign ministers resulting in ASEAN’s Six-Point Principles on the South China Sea. *In an informal ministerial meeting, to my left, the Foreign Ministers of Vietnam, Pham Binh Minh, the Philippines, Albert del Rosario, and Malaysia, Anifah Aman, going over another variant of a text. By then we had dispensed with formalities and directly worked on the draft.*



Pause ■ Sometimes, a momentary pause in proceedings is required to prevent a total collapse in negotiations. Unfortunately, it does not always bring the expected results. *Awaiting other ASEAN*



ministers, with, to my immediate right, Singapore Foreign Minister K. Shanmugam and Malaysian Foreign Minister Anifah Aman, in an informal-informal, as a last-ditch attempt to secure consensus on the South China Sea at the 45th AMM. Minister Shanmugam was already scheduled to leave Phnom Penh that morning but abruptly changed his plans as I requested another ministerial attempt to reach consensus. As it was by then apparent that the political dynamics made consensus impossible, my mind was already set on establishing the right conditions for the next stage: a damage-limitation shuttle-diplomacy, immediately after the AMM.



Less is more ■ Philippines Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario welcomed me early on the morning of 18 July 2012 to reflect on the way forward following the rather sombre experience at the just-concluded AMM in Phnom Penh. It was the first of several meetings and communications I had with my ASEAN colleagues over a thirty-six-hour period. Unlike at the AMM, we dispensed with documents and drafts and simply exchanged views on what ultimately matters for ASEAN on the South China Sea. Based on such exchanges, I derived "impressions" that ultimately led to the identification of ASEAN's Six-Point Principles on the South China Sea.



The imperative of ASEAN unity ■ Only hours after my meeting in Manila, I was in Hanoi to meet DPM/Foreign Minister of Vietnam Pham Binh Minh. While expressing full cognizance of the principled positions of all the South China Sea claimant states that are members of ASEAN, I appealed to the strategic imperative to maintain and consolidate ASEAN unity.



Back to Phnom Penh ■ In my consultations with DPM/Foreign Minister of Cambodia Hor Namhong, I chose not to dwell on the South China Sea issue, suggesting that ASEAN's common position on the issue is well known and should not be a subject of controversy. Rather, I appealed to his interest and role as Chair of ASEAN 2012, to prevent the disagreements on the issue from holding hostage the wider ASEAN cooperation, especially its Community-building.

Taking stock ■ Prior to my arrival back in Jakarta following a thirty-six-hour shuttle diplomacy to ASEAN capitals, as well as communications with ASEAN foreign ministers, I shared my “impressions” with Singapore Foreign Minister K. Shanmugam. Given the pressure of time and the need to maintain diplomatic momentum, and demonstrative of Singapore’s pragmatism, we met at the Singapore airport. Throughout the efforts, I detected deep recognition among ASEAN colleagues that the divisions among ASEAN at the just-concluded AMM must not be allowed to stand.



ASEAN Chair 2013 ■ Brunei Darussalam’s Foreign Minister, Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, was amongst ASEAN’s longest serving, providing steady influence during the country’s chairmanship of ASEAN in 2013. Brunei agreed to alter the year of its ASEAN chairmanship from 2011 to 2013 as Indonesia was set to chair APEC in 2013.



Consultation ■ Often a brief moment to share views prior to the commencement of formal meetings helps tremendously. *With the Lao PDR’s Deputy PM/Foreign Minister Thongloun Sisoulith at the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on 9 August 2014 in Myanmar.*

Ties that bind ■ Indonesia's relations with Singapore — as with its other closest neighbour, Malaysia — have always been critical in positively influencing the dynamics within ASEAN. With (top) Singapore Foreign Minister George Yeo during my official visit to Singapore in August 2010; and with (bottom) Singapore Foreign Minister K. Shanmugam, his wife Seetha and my wife Sranya, in Bandung, Indonesia, in February 2014 following the regular Indonesia–Singapore ministerial consultations held in an informal setting.



Ties that bind ■ It is also impossible to overemphasize the importance of Indonesia–Malaysia relations on wider ASEAN cooperation. Hence, I have sought to ensure regular bilateral consultations between the two countries. Welcoming Malaysian Foreign Minister Anifah Amman in Jakarta in June 2010 (top) and (below) in a more informal setting, following a JCBC, in Bali on 7 December 2010 with his wife, Siti Rubiah, and my wife, Sranya.





Consolidating peace in the region ■ The expansion of ASEAN to include the CLMV countries — notwithstanding the resulting further diversification of the interests within — have been critical in further consolidating peace in the entire Southeast Asia region. *With Vietnam DPM/Foreign Minister Pham Gia Khiem in Singapore in 2009.*

Promoting democratic principles in the region ■ Of the three ASEAN Community pillars, the Political-Security Community pillar was without doubt one of the most challenging to promote. More than mere adoption of declarations, it has required the establishment of concrete state practice by ASEAN member states. Indonesia at the time viewed the Philippines as an important partner in such efforts. *With Philippines Secretary for Foreign Affairs Albert del Rosario in Jakarta in July 2014.*



Bangkok Declaration ■ As one of ASEAN's founding member countries, Thailand has historically played an important role in ASEAN's development, as epitomized in ASEAN's founding document, the Bangkok Declaration. As with the other ASEAN member states, developments within the country naturally have consequences for the region as a whole. *With Thai Foreign Minister Kasit Piromya, with whom I worked closely on a host of regional issues, in Jakarta in April 2010.*



Part of the solution ■ As geographically proximate neighbours, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore are constantly challenged to manage issues that defy national solutions alone. All throughout, I have been of the view that as founding ASEAN member states, the three countries have an obligation to present themselves as part of the solution to the region's problems. One such issue has been the haze that has affected the region during certain dry seasons. *With Malaysian Foreign Minister Anifah Aman, to my left, and Singapore Foreign Minister K. Shanmugam, to my right, following an informal trilateral meeting on the sidelines of the 46th AMM in Brunei Darussalam in July 2013 to help ensure that the issue does not burden ASEAN as a whole.*



Part of the solution ■ The 2004 tsunami was instrumental in pushing for ASEAN's readiness in dealing with natural disasters. In April 2011, in response to the earthquake and tsunami affecting Japan, a Special ASEAN–Japan Ministerial meeting was convened at the ASEAN Secretariat, Jakarta, attended by the ASEAN foreign ministers or their representatives, the Foreign Minister of Japan, Takeaki Matsumoto, and the President of Indonesia, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono.

ASEAN Chair 2014 ■ Throughout 2011, the year of Indonesia's ASEAN chairmanship, I had to manage the impending ASEAN decision on Cambodia's chairmanship of ASEAN for 2014. It required a deft management of often-conflicting national-regional-global dynamics. In an unprecedented move, as the ASEAN Chair, I was tasked to assess Myanmar's readiness to chair the group. Even the sequences of the meetings were full of symbolism and were carefully crafted. *One of a series of meetings with the Myanmar national human rights commission and NGOs in Yangon on the evening of 28 October 2011.*



ASEAN Chair 2014 ■ Having deferred their chairmanship of ASEAN in 2005, the authorities in Myanmar in 2011 declared their readiness to chair ASEAN in 2014. While ultimately the decision was for ASEAN to make, I emphasized to the Government of Myanmar the need for “conducive conditions” — internally within Myanmar as well as beyond the region — to ensure its effective chairmanship of ASEAN. *With Foreign Minister of Myanmar Wunna Maung Lwin (top) and President of Myanmar Thein Sein (bottom) in Naypyidaw on the morning of 29 October 2011 following the series of meetings with Myanmar NGO representatives in Yangon the evening before.*





ASEAN Chair 2014 ■ The series of consultations concluded with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on the evening of 29 October 2011. The meeting, the first by an ASEAN Chair, was critical in consolidating trust and confidence in ASEAN, and for me to express my conviction that far from being seen as a premature “reward” to Myanmar’s ongoing reform process, ASEAN chairmanship by Myanmar would help consolidate momentum for such reform. *At the commencement of the meeting at her home (left), nearly two-hours long, and its conclusion (right), at which she expressed support for any decision on the chairmanship that would bring “joy to the people of Myanmar”.*



ASEAN Chairmanship 2014 ■ In December 2011, soon after the formal decision by the 19th ASEAN Summit in Bali, Indonesia, I returned to Yangon and personally informed Daw Aung San Suu Kyi of the decision. *There was a distinct contrast in the atmosphere between the first meeting in October 2011 and the one in December.*



People-centred ASEAN? ■

One often-cited lexicon within ASEAN in recent years has been the notion of a “people-centred” ASEAN. In January 2013 — in response to the unfolding developments in Myanmar’s Rakhine State — I paid a visit to witness first-hand the scale of the unfolding humanitarian crisis; unprecedented direct access given to a fellow ASEAN member state by the then Myanmar authorities. Having travelled to various conflict zones as part of UN Security Council missions when I served as Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the UN, the scenes that greeted me provided yet another reminder of the unbearable suffering of ordinary people as a result of conflicts. ASEAN cannot truly be a caring and sharing community if it fails to collectively address such common challenges. *A picture is worth a thousand words.*

ASEAN's partners

■ ASEAN has had a transformative impact on the role and place of Southeast Asian countries in the wider region. To remain relevant, however, it must continue to “earn” its much vaunted centrality in the wider region. *With Foreign Minister of Japan, Fumio Kishida, in Jakarta in March 2014.*



ASEAN's partners ■

I worked closely with U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in managing ASEAN–U.S. perspectives during a key phase in Myanmar's reform process, as well as U.S. participation in the EAS. *With the Secretary of State in Jakarta in September 2012.*



Similarly, with Secretary of State John Kerry, in Jakarta in February 2014.

ASEAN's Partners ■

Meetings outside ASEAN frameworks still provide valuable opportunities to deliberate with Dialogue Partners on the region's developments and ASEAN's perspectives. *With the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Korea, Kim Sung-hwan, in Seoul for the Nuclear Security Summit in 2012.*

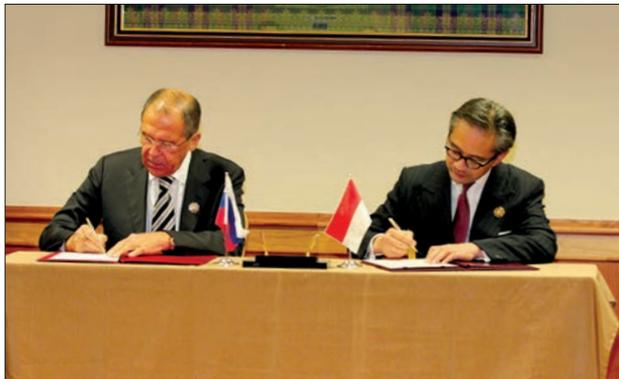


ASEAN's Partners ■

India's engagement in the ASEAN-led regional architecture has been key in anticipating its increasing geoeconomic and geopolitical importance as part of ASEAN's Indo-Pacific perspective. *With the Foreign Minister of India, Salman Khurshid, in Jakarta in 2014.*

ASEAN's Partners ■

The Russian Federation's participation in the EAS, concurrently with the decision to admit the United States, is significant in helping secure a "dynamic equilibrium" in the region. *With the Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, Sergey Lavrov, on the sidelines of the ASEAN meeting in Brunei Darussalam in 2013.*





ASEAN's partners ■ As neighbours, having common issues and challenges to manage and overcome, for Indonesia, Australia's engagement with ASEAN is of significant importance. Deliberations between the two countries have been particularly productive on the issue of the region's evolving architecture, in particular the EAS, and on the region's capacity to deal with natural disasters. *With (left) Australian Foreign Minister Stephen Smith during his visit to Jakarta in 2010 and with (right) Australian Foreign Minister Kevin Rudd during a visit to Jakarta in 2011.*



ASEAN's Partners ■ *With Australian Foreign Minister Bob Carr, conversing on the two countries' bilateral relations and regional developments in an informal setting — at a tea plantation just outside Jakarta, in March 2013 (top) and with his wife, Helena, and my wife, Sranya (bottom).*





ASEAN's partners ■ The state of relations between ASEAN and China have a tremendous impact on overall dynamics in the region. *With the Foreign Minister of China, Yang Jiechi (left), in Jakarta in August 2012 and Wang Yi (right), in Jakarta in May 2013.*



ASEAN's partners ■ *With Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop on the sidelines of the 47th AMM, in Naypyidaw, August 2014.*



ASEAN's Partners ■ Timor Leste's admission to ASEAN is essential to consolidate a community of peace and prosperity in Southeast Asia. *With the Foreign Minister of Timor Leste, Jose Guterres, in Jakarta in February 2014.*

Regional/Global ▪
 Indonesia has consistently championed the provision of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter on the role of regional organizations in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. Hence, enhancement of ASEAN's partnership with the UN has been a key priority. *UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, on a visit to Jakarta in March 2012.*



ASEAN Secretary-General ▪
 Notwithstanding ever-growing and sometimes conflicting expectations



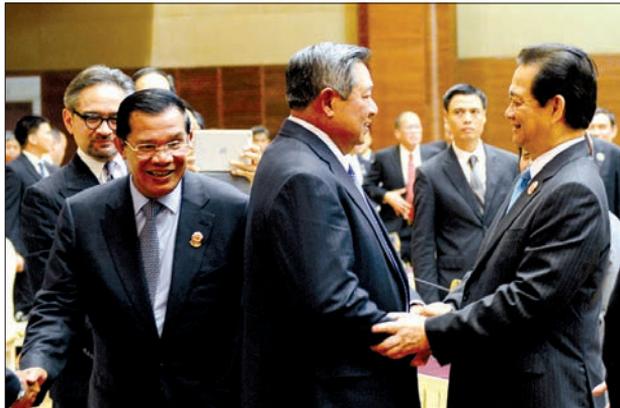
of member states, successive ASEAN Secretary-Generals have made immense and indelible contributions to ASEAN. (above) *With the then out-going ASEAN Secretary-General, the late Surin Pitsuwan, and incoming Secretary-General, Le Luong Minh, following a luncheon at Indonesia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to mark the transfer of responsibilities from the former to the latter in January 2013. (right) With Foreign Minister of Indonesia (2001–9) Hassan Wirajuda and Secretary-General Surin Pitsuwan at an ASEAN Day diplomatic reception in August 2010.*





In conversation ■ ASEAN meetings are more than formal occasions. They provide occasions for friendships to be renewed. *My wife Sranya in conversation with U.S. Secretary of State Hilary Clinton in June 2011, moments before the ASEAN/ARF dinner.*

Passing through
 ■ ASEAN Summits provide valuable opportunities for leaders to renew friendships and compare notes outside the formal speeches. *At the 24th ASEAN Summit in May 2014, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono greeting Vietnam Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung, with Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen passing by.*



ASEAN Summitry
 ■ In its five-decade existence, ASEAN has demonstrated a region-wide convening capacity and, indeed, earned a centrality role. *At the ASEAN Summit/EAS gala dinner in Bali in 2011, Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, in conversation with U.S. President Barack Obama (to his right). Also seen, among others, Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard, Prime Minister of Vietnam Nguyen Tan*

Dung, Indonesian First Lady Ani Yudhoyono, President of the Republic of Korea Lee Myung-bak, Prime Minister of India Manmohan Singh, and the Sultan of Brunei Darussalam Hassanal Bolkiah.