This March 11, 2009, the Confederation of ASEAN Journalists (CAJ) turned 34.

More than three decades ago, representatives of national journalists’ organisations in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, established a region-wide organisation the Confederation of ASEAN Journalists (CAJ) with the following objectives: to enhance the development of the ASEAN region, to promote closer relations and to cooperate fully in advancing journalism towards a healthy, free and responsible press.

The first region-wide journalists’ body thus emerged inaugurated in Jakarta on March 11, 1975 just a year before the ASEAN heads of states and government met for their first summit in Bali on February 24, 1976, to set a common course for promoting regional concord, amity, peace and progress.

The birth of CAJ was in response to the call for "bringing ASEAN closer to the people's hearts and minds" as a force of integration against a backdrop of Southeast Asia distressed by traditional and global power rivalries and conflicts.

The founding organizations of CAJ are:

**INDONESIA**  Persatuan Wartawan Indonesia (PWI - Indonesian Journalists Association).

**MALAYSIA**  National Union of Journalists Malaysia (NUJM).

**PHILIPPINES**  National Press Club (NPC) of the Philippines.

**SINGAPORE**  Singapore National Union of Journalists (SNUJ).

**THAILAND**  Confederation of Thai Journalists (CTJ).

The CTJ, the umbrella body uniting all journalists organisations in Thailand, succeeded the Reporters and Journalists Association of Thailand which signed the original Joint Declaration of Confederation of ASEAN Journalists on March 11, 1975. Journalists in Brunei Darussalam, the sixth ASEAN member, have no national Organisation, hence the reason for their inability until now to participate actively in the confederation.

The CAJ bases its Permanent Secretariat in Jakarta and shares the same premises as the host affiliate Organisation, Persatuan Wartawan Indonesia or Indonesian Journalists Association. The General Assembly, its highest organ, convenes once in two years to determine policies and programmes, and elect executive officers and directors representing all affiliate organisations (Charter). The presidency is rotated among member organisations every two years following a general assembly.

Since its inaugural meeting in Jakarta, the CAJ had held nine ASEAN-level assemblies, as follows:

- Jakarta: 1983, 1994
- Hanoi: 2003
This record of activities of the organisation during the last 34 years, many of them conducted in cooperation with partner organisations, testifies to CAJ's endeavours and achievements in meeting the pledge to which it has committed itself since March 1975.

The CAJ strives to continue its onward march, with cooperation from national and international professional, educational and development-oriented organisations and institutions within ASEAN as well as those in Japan, Canada, Germany, China, Korea, Vietnam, Australia and United States of America. The CAJ developed partnerships and links with international organisations, sent delegates to conferences to voice ASEAN's vision and concern, and talked to ministers and head of states to air views and pass on feedbacks.

Highly reputable international institutions and organisations with which the CAJ cooperates include Nihon Shinbun Kyokai (Japan Newspaper Publishers and Editors' Association), Japan Foreign Press Centre, Asia-Pacific Foundation of Canada, Asia Foundation, Asia Journalists Association, Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre Singapore, Press Foundation of Asia, Asian Institute for Development Communication, Friedrich Naumann Stiftung, the International Institute for Journalism in Berlin, International Development Research Centre, International Federation of Journalists, UNESCO and several others. New contacts and links continued to be established each year.

**CODE OF ETHICS FOR ASEAN JOURNALISTS**

**PREAMBLE**

The Confederation of ASEAN Journalists, aware of the responsibility of journalists to the public in each country of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, with a view to achieving peace and progress in the region, hereby promulgates this Code of Ethics for ASEAN Journalists.

1) The ASEAN journalist shall resort only to fair, open and honest means or effort to obtain news, photographs, or documents necessary to enable him/her to carry out his/her professional work, properly identifying himself/herself in the process as being a representative from media.

2) The ASEAN journalist shall not allow personal motives or interest to influence him/her or to colour his/her views in a manner that would reflect on his/her professional integrity or would undermine the dignity of his/her profession.

3) The ASEAN journalist shall not demand, or accept any payment, gift or any other consideration by way of recompense for reporting what is not true or for withholding or suppressing the truth.

4) The ASEAN journalist shall honestly report and interpret the news, making sure, to the best of his/her knowledge and ability, not to suppress essential facts or distort the truth through exaggeration or through wrong or improper emphasis.

5) The ASEAN journalist shall give any person aggrieved by his/her report or interpretation of the news the right of reply.

6) The ASEAN journalist shall not violate confidential information or material obtained by him/her in the exercise of his/her calling.

7) The ASEAN journalist shall not identify his/her source, and shall resist any outside attempt to make him/her do so, when so specifically enjoined by his/her informant.

8) The ASEAN journalist shall refrain from writing reports which have the effect of destroying the honour or reputation of a private person unless public interest justifies it.

9) The ASEAN journalist shall pay due regard to the multi-ethnic, cultural, and religious fabric of ASEAN countries.

10) The ASEAN journalist shall not write reports, opinions or comments which would endanger the security of his/her country, or foment armed confrontation between his/her country and any other ASEAN country, striving at all times, instead, to promote closer friendly relations among them.

Done and adopted in Manila on the 25th of November, 1987, during the Seventh CAJ General Assembly.
CONSTITUTION OF THE CONFEDERATION
OF ASEAN JOURNALISTS
(Amended and adopted in the Seventh General Assembly, Manila, November 26-28, 1987)

PREAMBLE

We, journalists of countries of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), desiring to advance the cause of a healthy, free and responsible press in order that it could serve as dynamic instrument for progress, prosperity, social justice and peace in this region - consonant with the principles of the ASEAN - LARATION - in representation of and by authority vested in us by our respective national organizations, mutually consent to the formation of a confederation of journalists and do hereby ordain and promulgate Constitution.

ARTICLE I - NAME

SECTION 1: The Confederation organization shall be officially known as the CONFEDERATION OF ASEAN JOURNALISTS.

ARTICLE II - FOUNDING MEMBERS

SECTION 1: The Confederation shall have as its Founding Members the lawfully established and recognized national organizations, unions, associations, and/or clubs of journalists in countries composing the Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN), to wit: INDONESIAN JOURNALISTS' ASSOCIATION (Persatuan Wartawan Indonesia), NATIONAL UNION OF JOURNALISTS MALAYSIA, (Kesatuan Kebangsaan Wartawan Malaysia), NATIONAL PRESS CLUB OF THE PHILIPPINES, THE SINGAPORE NATIONAL UNION OF JOURNALISTS, and THE REPORTERS' AND JOURNALISTS' ASSOCIATION OF THAILAND.

ARTICLE III - OBJECTIVES

SECTION 1: The Confederation shall have the following objectives:

(a) The promotion of a healthy, free and responsible press, the advancement of the cause of journalism, and the forging of closer relations among journalists in the ASEAN countries and other countries.

(b) The promotion of better understanding among peoples of the region in order to attain prosperity, social justice and peace.

(c) The articulation of the aspirations, sentiments, affairs and interests of countries of this region in order that they would be better understood and appreciated by other peoples of the world.

SECTION 2: The Confederation shall initiate and/or undertake the following activities:

(a) Safeguard the common interests of journalists while in their legitimate pursuit of their profession, pursuant to generally accepted journalistic codes of ethical conduct, and in harmony with prevailing national policies, rules and regulations of countries within the sphere of the Confederation.

(b) Improve the professional standards of journalists in the region by arranging training, research and development programmes, seminars, greater flow and exchanges of views, information and knowledge of technical skills, inter-visitations, and such other activities that may be useful and beneficial to the professional growth of journalists.

SECTION 3: The Confederation shall likewise encourage the involvement of journalists in the development activities of the profession within their respective countries, in particular, and in the region.
ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

SECTION 1: The Founding Members stipulated in Article 11, Section I shall be known as Charter Members having rights and privileges to accept nomination of new members.

SECTION 2: The membership shall consist of Charter Members, Regular Members, and Associate Members.

SECTION 3: Charter Members, comprising of the five Founding national journalists' organization/associations, shall enjoy the right of permanent seat in the Membership Committee, automatic memberships of the Board of Directors, and the right to attend the General Assembly and Board of Directors' Meetings.

SECTION 4: Regular memberships, comprising of groups or individuals, shall be open to organizations of journalists and/or individual working journalists in the ASEAN region. Regular members shall enjoy the fight of membership, except seats on the Board of Directors.

SECTION 5: Associate Memberships shall be open to other press organizations, institutions and individuals whose work or functions are allied to journalism profession. Associate Members shall enjoy the rights of Regular Member, except participation in the General Assembly policy deliberations, but shall have no voting rights.

SECTION 6: Applications for membership shall be made through founding charter member organizations and the Membership Committee of the Confederation.

SECTION 7: Charter Members shall enjoy rights and privileges, and assume responsibilities and obligations on an equal basis.

SECTION 8: A Membership Committee, comprising representatives of the Founding Charter Members, sets forth qualification for new memberships.

ARTICLE V – ORGANS

SECTION 1: The Confederation shall have the following organs:

(a) General Assembly, (b) Board of Directors, (c) Secretariat.

SECTION 2: There shall be an ADVISORY COUNCIL to be composed of past presidents of the confederation and persons appointed by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VI - GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SECTION 1: The General Assembly shall consist of the accredited delegates of member organizations.

SECTION 2: It shall perform the following functions:

(a) Determine the policies and activities of the Confederation, (b) Adopt a code of ethics, (c) Appoint the President, Vice-President and Secretary General, and confirm the nomination of directors by the members. (d) Determine and act on matters referred to it by the Board of Directors, committees, or by any member. (e) Approve the budget. (f) Fix the amount of dues. (g) Perform such other acts that it may deem appropriate and necessary to promote, protect and preserve the interests of the Confederation.

SECTION 3: An Ordinary Session of the General Assembly shall be called once every two (2) years, the site in which to be rotated on an alphabetical order of the countries which the members belong and to start where the meeting of the General Assembly is held.
ARTICLE VII - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

SECTION 1: The Board of Directors shall be composed of the President, Vice-President, Secretary General, and two directors for each Member organization and the Permanent-Secretary.

SECTION 2: The Board of Directors shall perform the following duties:

(a) Implement the programmes and projects adopted and approved by the General Assembly
(b) Prepare the agenda of the General Assembly
(c) Refer to the General Assembly for appropriate action any study or recommendation which it had initiated, or those undertaken by any other organs of members of the Confederation
(d) Exercise such other functions and duties as may be delegated to it by the General Assembly, or whatever it deems appropriate and necessary to protect and preserve the interest of the Confederation

SECTION 3: The Board of Directors shall meet in Ordinary Session at least once a year. It may, however, be called to Special Session upon the petition of the President, Vice-President, Secretary-General or four directors acting jointly, whenever the need for such Special Session arises.

SECTION 4: The Board of Directors may, at its discretion, call for consideration and/or Approval by mail or by other effective means of communication of any resolution on which it considers urgent action. Whenever an approval by this means is required, each member shall be given forty (40) days after the transmittal of any business, ought to be transacted to return action thereon.

ARTICLE VIII - OFFICERS

SECTION 1: The Confederation shall have the following officers: (a) President, (b) Vice-President, (c) Directors, (d) Secretary General, (e) Permanent Secretary, (f) Auditor

ARTICLE IX - THE PRESIDENT

SECTION 1: The President shall be appointed from the Charter Member of the country where the meeting of the General Assembly is held.

SECTION 2: The President shall have a term of office of two (2) years to commence at the close of the meeting of the General Assembly at which he or she is appointed until the end of the next succeeding General Assembly.

SECTION 3: It shall be the duty of the President to preside over the General Assembly or any other sessions of the General Assembly and the Board of Directors.

SECTION 4: The President shall be the chief executive officer of the Confederation. He or she may, however, delegate such functions and duties as he or she may deem fit to the Vice-President, to any Director or the Secretary General.

SECTION 5: Without prejudice to the generality of the preceeding Sections above, whenever a change of officer takes place in the Charter member organization, the new President of the Charter member shall automatically become the President of the confederation.

ARTICLE X - THE VICE-PRESIDENT

SECTION 1: The Vice-Presiden shall be appointed from any member, and shall have a term of office which shall be co-terminus with the term of office of the President.

SECTION 2: It shall be the duty of the Vice-President to assume the responsibilities and perform the functions of the President in the later's absence or inability to perform his duties.
ARTICLE XI - THE DIRECTORS

SECTION 1: Each member shall nominate two (2) Directors.

SECTION 2: A director shall have a term of office of two (2) years to commence at the close of the General Assembly at which his or her nomination was confirmed until the end of the next General Assembly thereafter.

SECTION 3: Any member shall have the power to recall any director it had nominated and nominate another in an acting capacity for the unexpired term.

SECTION 4: It shall be the duty of the director to attend the meetings of the Board of Directors, and to help in the implementation of decision of either the Board or the General Assembly.

ARTICLE XII - THE SECRETARIAT

SECTION 1: A Permanent Secretariat shall be established in Jakarta, Indonesia.

SECTION 2: The Secretary-General shall be appointed from any Charter Member (holding the Presidency) and will hold a term of office of two (2) years, commencing at the close of the General Assembly at which he or she is appointed.

SECTION 3: It shall be headed by the Secretary-General. He or she shall appoint the Permanent Executive Secretary and his or her staff resident in Indonesia.

SECTION 4: The Secretary-General shall attend all sessions of the General Assembly, Board of Directors and committees and shall keep the records of their proceedings.

SECTION 5: The Secretary-General shall be responsible to the General Assembly and the Board of Directors.

SECTION 6: The Permanent Secretariat shall perform such duties as may be necessary to ensure the efficient operations of the Confederation.

SECTION 7: Without prejudice to the generality of the Section 2, whenever a change of office takes place within the Charter Member organization, the new Secretary General (or General Secretary) of the Charter Member shall automatically become the Secretary General of the Confederation.

SECTION 8: The Secretary General may set a working secretariat to assist him or her and the President in carrying out the duties and functions.

ARTICLE XIII - THE AUDITORS

SECTION 1: An auditor shall be appointed by the board of Directors. The appointee should preferably be a resident of Indonesia.

SECTION 2: It shall be the duty of the Auditor to audit the account of the Confederation.

ARTICLE XIV - BUDGET

SECTION 1: The budget and allocation of costs to be borne by Charter Members shall be approved by the General Assembly.

SECTION 2: Unless otherwise provided, the allocation of cost shall be borne on an equal basis.
ARTICLE XV - MEETINGS

SECTION 1: As a principle, the procedures and rules to be observed during meetings of the General Assembly shall be determined by the host member.

SECTION 2: Unless the host recommends otherwise, the following procedures shall be applicable

(a) Transportation fare shall be borne by the representatives of members from their country of origin and back.

(b) Accomodations, including lodging, food, transport and other activities within the host country shall be borne by the host member.

ARTICLE XVI – QUORUM

SECTION 1: The presence of representatives of at least three-fifths (3/5) of the member shall constitute a quorum for the General Assembly or the Board of Directors to conduct official business in any session.

SECTION 2: In any other meetings, any sufficient number of representatives may be considered as constituting quorum.

SECTION 3: It shall, however, be understood that all members shall be properly notified of and be given sufficient time to prepare for any meeting.

ARTICLE XVII - HONOUR LIST

SECTION 1: There shall be an HONOUR LIST to be composed of individuals or organizations that have rendered exceptional services towards the realization of CAJ objectives as set forth in Article III of the Constitution.

ARTICLE XVIII – AMENDMENTS

SECTION 1: This Constitution may be amended only at a session of the General Assembly. However, those articles that cover the rights and privileges of the Charter Members shall not be amended.

This amended CAJ Constitution was submitted to and adopted at the Seventh General Assembly in Manila, 26-30 November 1987.

ARTICLE XIX - CAJ OBSERVERS

The status of observers may be extended to journalists' organizations in the wider South East Asian region, including the Pacific and Oceania countries.


Charter Revision Committee:
Chairman: D.H. Assegaff (PWI-Indonesia)
Abdul Razak (CAJ Permanent Secretariat), Bob Teoh (CAJ Sec. General/ NUJM Malaysia), Goh Kay Chong (NUJM-Malaysia), Jose L. Pavia (NPC-Philippines), Ivan Lim (SNUJ-Singapore), Manich Sooksomchitra (CTJ-Thailand);
Legal Adviser: Luis R. Mauricio,
NUJM-appointed participant: Peter Kandiah (NUJM-Malaysia).