

Originally, heads of
government of each
member



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Originally, ASEAN was meant to be an association of countries engaged in nation building. The end of World War II saw the emerging of Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Singapore as sovereign independent nations. Nation building was often vulnerable to foreign intervention. It was important for the governing people to have free hands to conduct their policies without interference from neighbouring countries. Small countries like Singapore and Brunei are always in fear of the influences exerted by bigger neighbouring countries like Indonesia and Malaysia.

ASEAN was established to ensure sovereignty stayed resolutely located at the national level. The primary principle of ASEAN was noninterference. ASEAN is open to the participation of all States in the Southeast Asian region which are willing to subscribe to its aims, principles and purposes. ASEAN aims to represent the collective will of the countries of Southeast Asia to bind themselves together in friendship. It hopes through the joint efforts of its members to secure for its peoples the blessings of peace, freedom and prosperity. The ASEAN holds meetings, known as the ASEAN Summit, where heads of government of each member country meet to confer and resolve regional issues. In addition meetings are conducted with other countries outside the block with the intention of promoting external relations.

Officially the summit meets for three days annually to discuss the pressing issues affecting the region. Member nations host the summit in alphabetical order. The schedule of the meeting involves the internal meeting of its members, the meeting of the leaders of its member states with foreign ministers of the ASEAN Regional Forum, a meeting with ASEAN Plus Three: the leaders of three Dialogue Partners: People's Republic of China, Japan and

South Korea and a meeting with ASEAN CER: the leaders of two dialogue partners Australia and New Zealand. The fundamental principles of ASEAN involve mutual respect for the independence and sovereignty of its members. It holds the right of every member state to lead its national existence from external interference. It calls for the non interference in the internal affairs of one another and the settlement of differences in peaceful manner.

It denounces the use of force or threat. Ever since its inception three decades ago, no tension has spiraled into armed confrontation among ASEAN member countries due to the political dialogue and mutual understanding they share. The members of ASEAN vow to always resort to peaceful processes in the settlement of intra regional disputes and to look on their security as essentially linked to one another and held together by geographic location, common vision and objectives.