

## ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), Intellectual Property, and Future Directions for Patent Administration in the Region

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The Article focuses on the role of patents and effective patent administration. The Author argues that patent administration in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region will grow in scope and effectivity over the next years. It makes the case for a strong mechanism for the enforcement of intellectual property (IP) rights embodied in the various intra-regional and international instruments protecting the same.

The Article looks into the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) whose objective is to make the region a competitive, innovative, and dynamic economy. IP protection is critical to the AEC's objective. The Article highlights the significant contributions of ASEAN Member States to the attainment of regional goals through the implementation of programs and activities set in the ASEAN Intellectual Property Rights Action Plans.

ASEAN has fully recognized the important role of IP to promote innovation and creation. ASEAN Intellectual Property Offices (ASEAN IP Offices) have made significant progress in promoting the use of the patent system to enhance innovation. In the context of ASEAN Integration, ASEAN IP Offices, the Author argues, have remarkably shifted from the traditional regulatory framework into a more development-oriented approach in patent administration. The Article foresees that the ASEAN patent administration “will be characterized by harmonization of patent examination practice, increased work-sharing between ASEAN IP Offices and other IP Offices, enhanced competency and organizational capacity on patent administration, improved quality and efficiency in delivery of services, and greater Intra-ASEAN and international cooperation with dialogue partners by 2025.”