**FORUM:** ASEAN+

**QUESTION OF:** Implementing measures to enforce hygiene regulation in wet markets in Asia

*THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS,*

*Recognising* that LEDC’s don’t have the fundings to afford the medical care of another pandemic,

*Noting* that wet markets are socially and culturally important to the local inhabitants of South-East Asian countries,

*Noting with concern* that wet markets are proven to be unhygienic to a point where they are dangerous for regional and now also global health,

*Emphasizing* the importance of hygiene, keeping the sanitation system clean in order to prevent an outbreak of deadly viruses,

*Realising* mutual agreement is crucial in order to initiate and coordinate to stop the spread of new viruses,

*Conscious* of the past mistakes in dealing with the issue, and taking into account the mistakes made in the past in order to solve the issue of hygiene in wet markets as effectively as possible,

*Emphasizing* the importance of WHO (World Health Organisation) in implementing strict and effective guidelines as well as signing inspectors from WHO in order to collect data on the hygiene in the wet markets across the countries of ASEAN,

*Reminds*all nations that the combating of further mass disease spread is an issue addressed by the UN and is a core part of the organization’s mission statement as well as a long-term objective,

*Considers* the executive secretary of the 2020 UN Convention on Biological Diversity, Elizabeth M. Mrema’s call for an urgent, global ban on wildlife markets in order to prevent forthcoming pandemics,

*Further proclaims* about the cultural, social and economic significance as well as heritage of the above mentioned ‘wet markets’ as these have been a major supplier of nourishment for the middle and working classes ever since the 1970s,

*Also reminds* all nations that the World Health Organization implemented an Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures to protect human life from plant or animal carried diseases,

*Stressing* the fact that wet markets have been the origins of zoonotic diseases such as Covid-19, SARS and the H5N1 bird influenza,

1. Encourageswet markets in Southeast Asia such as the Hanoi Central Market to follow guidelines provided by the WHO on healthy food markets, due to the efficacy of these guidelines in the following areas:
2. Primary Food Producers:
   1. improved production practices
   2. improved quality of food and price
   3. greater market access and greater public image (when advertising the markets following the guidelines)
   4. reduced costs due to wastage of food
3. Food Vendors:
   1. improved business and sales
   2. improved product quality
   3. safer Working Environment
   4. preserving customs in contrast to the corporate supermarkets
4. Customers:
   1. improved source of safe and nutritious food
   2. increased community health and safety
   3. reduced community healthcare costs
   4. increased knowledge levels (mainly but not restricted to food safety, general hygiene, health and management)
5. Health Authorities:
   1. reduced incidence of foodborne disease
   2. improved nutritional status
   3. reduced community health care costs;
6. Proposes sending health experts for inspection of the wet markets in question in time periods of 1-3 months, who will inspect:
   1. selling of wildlife animals,
   2. hygienic production and selling practices,
   3. adequate facilities, such as hand washing areas, toilets, drainage and proper sewage;
7. Recommendsto the South East Asian Governments if the resolutions above cannot be enforced and followed, to make wet markets safer and modernize wet markets by making it more accessible and preventing risk of further outbreaks originating from food markets, which can be done by:
8. investing in market modernization programs, by researching the real needs of a wet market,
9. improvements in physical infrastructure of wet markets (such as separating live animals from deceased, handwashing, proper drainage, adequate toilets and fresh water supplies),
10. implementing proper food practices such as safe manufacturing practices and safe food handling,
11. implementation of effective traceability and callback systems,
12. implementing food inspections every 2 months,
13. training of all food vendors and sellers in the wet market on hygienic food handling and manufacturing practices;
14. Recommends to ensure that top quality inspections are made to keep everyone safe in terms of hygiene, which will benefit the following people:
    1. producers, who will benefit in the following areas:
       1. higher quality produce and thus higher prices and revenues
       2. healthy livestock
       3. no diseases killing all livestock, thus giving more certainty and stability
    2. consumers, who will benefit in the following areas:
       1. higher food quality
       2. safer food and therefore no life hazards for consumers, which will lead to peace of mind and freely shopping without worry
       3. better understanding of diseases and how to prevent them
    3. general population, who will benefit in the following areas:
       1. safety from diseases, which will lead to improved community health
       2. reduced needs for hospitals and medication
       3. better understanding of diseases and how to prevent them
    4. authorities and governments, who will benefit in the following areas:
       1. reduced need for financial aid for citizens with diseases
       2. less criticisms for bad management;
15. Encourages regulating wet markets instead of (partly) banning them;
16. Calls on countries to have an overseeing organisation;
17. Urges providing education in hygienic measures for stakeholders on wet markets, in the way of;
    1. governmental demand on attending public conferences about hygienic importance held by health experts. These needs to be attended by:
       1. everyone involved in the organisation of the wet markets
       2. everyone wanting to sell their products on the wet markets
    2. ensuring that an individual has attended this conference by giving them a stamp in a special passport, and only then allowing them on the premises of the wet market;
18. Proposes wet markets keep all products separated by category;
19. Requests all governments in South East Asia including Vietnam to enforce and ensure the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures is followed by large wet markets in their respective countries;
20. Encourages countries to either limit the number of stalls to 10 or to enlarge the market square to at least 1 acre;
21. Encourages all members of ASEAN to recognize the problem of insanitation and collaborate effectively in order to support the country in the modernization and implementation of effective sanitary system in the following manners:
22. by distribution of a system of sanitary control as well as seller permit(s) which will comply with the assigned norms of WHO,
23. introduce a severe monetary-penalizing policy.