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Author(s)	Labrador, Virgilio
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**Summary of Proceedings**

**By**

**Virgilio Labrador**

**SEMINAR ON URBANIZATION, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
AND THE MEDIA**

**April 8 - 9, 1994  
Singapore, AMIC Secretariat**

**Prepared by**

**VIRGILIO LABRADOR  
Seminar Coordinator**

**ASIAN MASS COMMUNICATION RESEARCH AND INFORMATION CENTRE  
39 Newton Road, Singapore 1130, Singapore**

## **SEMINAR ON "URBANIZATION, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE MEDIA"**

8-9 April 1994  
AMIC Conference Centre  
Singapore

### **SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS**

This report summarizes the proceedings of the Seminar on "Urbanization, Sustainable Development and the Media" held in Singapore from 8-9 April 1994. The seminar was organized by the Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre (AMIC), the National Council for the Environment and the Environmental Forum for Communicators of Singapore with the support of the Canadian High Commission-Singapore.

The objective of the seminar was to assess and highlight various strategies and initiatives in urban development and media responses to urban environmental problems in Southeast Asia; to promote linkages between the media and institutions that promote the study of urbanization and its environmental impact, in order to ensure a steady flow of current and reliable data on the problem for dissemination to the public; and to generate specific recommendations on how the media can contribute to promoting increased public awareness in response to the problems of urbanization.

Acting Minister for Community Development and Minister of State for the Environment Abdullah Tarmugi inaugurated the seminar. Regional experts from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank, the World Health Organization and other international organizations spoke on various issues on the environment and development in the ASEAN region.

The seminar had a mix of panel discussions, lectures, country presentations and working group sessions. Thirty five (35) participants from the ASEAN countries comprising

journalists, academics, communications professionals and government and non-government people attended the seminar.

The programme commenced with an overview of urbanization, sustainable development and the media in ASEAN by Anwar Fazal, regional coordinator of Asia Pacific 2000. This was followed by presentations and case studies on various strategies for sustainable development by a panel composed of Kunda Dixit, Interpress Service, Anne Fouillard, UNDP, and Dr. Victor Savage of the National University of Singapore. The afternoon of the first day was devoted to presentation on responses to problems such as human settlements by the UNDP Habitat Programme, air and water pollution by the World Bank, health and sanitation by the World Health Organization and Singapore's Green Plan by the Ministry of the Environment.

The morning of the second day was devoted to media responses to urbanization with country presentations from Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. The participants was divided into working groups in the afternoon to formulate recommendations on how to strengthen the media's role in response to urbanization problems. Among the recommendations formulated during the seminar, were greater media coverage and responsibilities in reporting urbanization issues, and further research and training.

(see **Appendix A** for the conference programme, **Appendix B** for the list of participants and **Appendix E** for the working group reports).

## **Evaluation**

Overall, the participants rated the quality of the programme very highly. The participants likewise gave very high ratings to the presentations and discussions. The seminar was generally regarded as a success in meeting its objectives. The seminar generated some actionable recommendations and provided a forum for the discussion of a very important

topic. A number of the participants, however, commented on the need to ensure follow-up work after the seminar.

### **Conclusion**

On the whole, the seminar achieved the objectives it set. In-depth discussions on a very important issues of concern to the region and actionable recommendations were generated from the working group sessions. Follow-up activities were identified for action with the proper agencies.