

READING 1.17

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is the main political and economic organization for that area. The leaders summit is their last meeting before the launch of the ASEAN Economic Community, or AEC, on December 31.

The AEC will be equivalent to the world's seventh largest economy. **It** was set up to create a highly competitive single market and production area. Organizers hope it will ease the movement of capital, goods, investment, services and skilled labor across ASEAN countries. The goal is to make the whole area more competitive and economically successful. But, some business leaders have low expectations for the ASEAN summit. Anthony Nelson is a director at the US – ASEAN Business Council in Washington. He believes that security will be an important issue at the meetings, especially after the terrorist attacks in Paris last week.

“The November summit includes the East Asia Summit, which primarily focuses on political and security issues. So that's going to be a big part of what is actually going on around the summit. A lot of the work that business gets really involved in tends to happen around the ASEAN economic ministers' meeting in August.” But, the AEC may have only limited influence on business activity when it comes into being next year. Experts expect little to change at first because there is still much to be done.

“The ASEAN single window, which is a customs project, is still very much a work in progress. But beginning next year they will start limited trials with five of the 10 ASEAN countries. And there have been past mutual recognition agreements for **credentials** of skilled professionals. But there's still a lot of work to be done in terms of actually **implementing** those agreements.” Some critics say the AEC will mainly help businesses, not the majority of people in Southeast Asia. Earlier this year, the ASEAN Civil Society Conference and ASEAN Peoples' Forum expressed concern about regional economic **integration**. In a statement, the group said such a move would mean unequal and unsustainable economic growth. This, it said, would result “in worsening poverty and inequalities of wealth.” Jerald Joseph is co – chair of the ASEAN People's Forum. He says people crossing borders to find employment need more protections. He said: “Cross – border migrant workers don't have the same level of protection or interest in the whole negotiation. So that's a little bit of a pity, a wasted chance, if it's not reflected in the coming document.” The 27th ASEAN Summit includes the organization's partners. Nations including China, India, Japan and the United States are to attend.

1. ASEAN is the main political and economic organization in

- A. East Asia
 - B. Southeast Asia
 - C. West Asia
 - D. North Asia
2. What does the word **“It”** in paragraph 2 refer to?
- A. ASEAN
 - B. Organizer
 - C. AEC
 - D. Business Council
3. According to Anthony Nelson, what is the important issue at the meetings?
- A. Security
 - B. Climate change
 - C. Business
 - D. Economy
4. According to the passage, what aspect tends to happen around the ASEAN economic ministers?
- A. Security
 - B. Climate change
 - C. Business
 - D. Economy
5. According to the passage, how many countries in the ASEAN will start limited trials?
- A. 3
 - B. 5
 - C. 7
 - D. 10
6. The word **“credentials”** in line 24 can be replaced by
- A. letters
 - B. salutations
 - C. invitations
 - D. certificates
7. The word **“implementing”** in line 25 is closest in meaning to
- A. carrying out
 - B. producing

- C. concentrating
- D. focusing

8. The word **“integration”** in line 29 can be replaced by

- A. utilization
- B. contribution
- C. combination
- D. separation

9. According to the passage, what would delay the increase of the economy?

- A. the recession
- B. the poverty
- C. the move
- D. the employment

10. According to the passage, who require more assurance?

- A. travellers
- B. immigrants
- C. residents
- D. tourists